SELECT

SERMONS

Preached upon ſpecial occaſions:

Viz.

The Qualification of a Goſpel-Miniſter.
The Light and Darkneſs of Nature.
The Spiritual Thriſt, or good Husbandry for the Soul.
The Barren Soyl, or Reaſons of unprofitableneſs under the Means of Grace.
The Severity and Partiality of Divine Juſtice.
Dei peculium, *or, Gods peculiar.*
The unhappineſs of a worldly mans Portion.
Salvation by Chriſt, the Sum of the Goſpel.
A Looking-glaſs for Magiſtrates.
Scripture-ſearch a neceſſary Duty for Chriſtians.

WITH TWO

POSITIONS

For Explication and Confirmation of theſe

QUESTIONS,

1. *Tota Chriſti juſtitia credentibus imputatur.*
2. *Fides juſtificat ſub ratione inſtrumenti.*

BY

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TO THE

READER.

Christian Reader,

AT the urgent importunity of some both Pious and Judicious, the Relict of the Author, with the consent of his neareſt Relations, hath preſented theſe Theſes and Sermons to publique view (as is hoped) for thy good: and would have thee advertiſed, That theſe onely are all his Labors as yet extant, or publiſhed to the world, and therefore none elſe to be owned as his, unleſs atteſted by the ſaid Relations. If theſe few ſhall be found acceptable, and beneficial to thee, it is probable that more hereafter will be made publique in the ſame Volumn: in the mean time it is heartily wiſhed that theſe may be as effectual to the Reader, as they were affectionately intended by the Speaker; and it is hoped then God will have glory, and his people good by them, which is the utmoſt aim of the publiſhing of them.

Farewel.

Errata.

PAge 5. line 2. *medium*, read *modum*. l. 17. r. *perſolutione*. p. 10. l 33. r. *vita*. p. 17. l. 10. *cum*, r. *enim*. p. 23. l. 2. r. *Scripture-precept*. p. 24. l. 10. r. *ἄνοιξις*. p. 26. l. 1. *heard*, r. *hard*. p. 36. l. 20. *waies*, r. *wages*. p. 64. l. 1. *this*, r. *his*. l. 34 *not*, r. *no*. p. 69. l. 26. *inient*, r. *extens*. p 129. l. 30. r. *argue*, *as*. p. 131. l. 35. r. *It is* hard, *that I ſay not* impoſsible. p. 148. l. 18. r. *he was at his*. p. 150. l. 35. *means*, r. *meanneſs*. p. 155. l 34. r. *unſucceſsfull*. p. 189. l. 11. r *enſe rect*. p. 199. l. 36. *wont*. r. *will not*. p. 207. l. 7. *being by a*. p. 211. l. 3. r. *κλητοὶ* p 246 l. 12. r. *ἀγοὶ*, & *ὅμοιοι*. p. 267. l. 31. r. *but principally and in joynt-efficiency*. p. 273. l. 39, 40 r. *it coſt nothing in reference to us, though in reference to Chriſts bloodſhed it was purchaſed*, Eph 1. 7. p. 279. l. 30. dele *of*. p. 280. l. 16. *it*, r. *them*, p. 283. l. 38. r. *futurus*. p. 311. l. 11. *of*, r. *to wrath*. p. 317. l. 24. *is*, r. *are*. p. 333. l. 17. *of*, r. *in*. p. 341. l. 28. *in*, r. *into*. p. 347. l. 1. *ſhall*, r. *ſhould*, p. 354. l. 3. *make it*, r. *make them*.

THESIS

DE TOTA

CHRISTI JUSTITIA

CREDENTIBUS

IMPUTATA,

Quam

Sub præsidio Reverendissimi Viri

JOANNIS ARROWSMITH

S. T. D.

Ac in eadem Professoris Regii, 8. Kal. *Februar.*

1654. in Scholis publicis

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ORNATISSIMO DOCTISSIMOQUE VIRO
JOANNI ARROWSMITH,
SS. Theologiæ Doctori, & Collegii SS. *Trinitatis* in Academia *Cantabrigiensi* Magistro.

AMicorum quorundam importunitas impetravit tandem, Vir amplissime, ut Posthumum hoc in publicum darem; & cui potiùs quàm dignitati tuæ dedicarem, cujus sub moderamine Author ipse haud ità pridem exercitium hoc Theologicum habuit. Vivum laudâsti, mortuum defende: Post tuum judicium formido nullum. Compenset hanc tuam benevolentiam ὁ τὸν κόπον τῆς ἀγάπης Deus æternante prosperitate. Et favere porrò nè desistas Authoris mœstissimo Parenti,

Vestræ tamen reverentiæ

& amplitudinis observantissimo,

JOANN. FROST.

ORATIO
ante initam disputationem.

SUmme Deus, misericors in Christo Pater, Cui debetur unicè, quòd inter nuperas Ecclesiæ simul & Reipublicæ ruinas nos, homunciones licèt indignissimi, superstites hodie sumus, quasi tot misericordiæ tuæ prænones & monumenta. Gratias Tibi agimus, non quas debemus, sed quas possumus maximas, quòd sub alarum tuarum umbra ad hunc usq; diem in mediis procellis Academias protegisti; quòd (oblatrante licèt invidiâ & ignorantiâ) nobis etiamnum indulges otium literarium, quo nominis tui & veritatis gloriæ, nostrûm aliorúmque saluti litare & invigilare possumus. Tu, Domine, inhabitas lucem inaccessam, Tu lucis spiritualis fons unicus, & Pater luminum; naturâ fatemur nos meras tenebras, altâ ignorantiæ nocte obvolutos, saxea circumgestamus corda, Tui solius (omnipotens Deus) prærogativa est cœcas mentes illuminare & corda adamantina emollire: nos ad pedes tuos humillimè provoluti oramus supplices, ut illucescas mentibus nostris luce Tuâ, ut animis Spiritu tuo afflatis, oculisque collyrio tuo inunctis, & mirabilia Legis & profunda Evangelii indies scrutemur magis & intelligamus; atq; ità potenter flecte reluctantes animos, ut in obsequium Veritatis nos totos tradamus. Fac, quæsumus, ut sordidis justitiæ nostræ exuti pannis, & Christi justitiæ stolâ induti, coram Te compareamus singuli, necnon eam, de qua disputaturi sumus, intus in cordibus nostris sentiamus discriminantem gratiam & fidem salutarem. Ità denique conatus nostros inpræsentiarum, omniáq; in posterum secundes studia, ut cedant in nominis Tui gloriam, Ecclesiæ emolumentum, dilucidationem veritatis, fidei augmentum ac robur, in salutari Christi cognitione profectum, æternámq; nostrûm omnium salutem per Jesum Christum, olim in terris, nunc à dextera Tua Salvatorẽ nostrum atq; Intercessorem, cui inter orandũ confidamus unicùm, cui Tecum unà cum Spiritu, Tri-uno Deo, sit laus & honos nunc & in æternum.

Theſis.

Tota Chriſti juſtitia credentibus imputatur ad juſtificationem.

Uſtificationis doctrinam *ſolitus erat olim* Lutherus Articulum ſtantis aut cadentis Eccleſiæ *nominare: cujus dicti veritatem utinam Hæreticorum, quotquot per retroacta ſecula fuêre, aut jam nunc ſunt, omnium iniquiora conamina plus ſatis non comprobâßent; quibus, quò faciliùs* Eccleſiam Reformatam *funditùs evertant & Religionem noſtram, altiùs radices agentem, ex hominum animis radicitùs evellant, in hanc juſtificationis arcem, quaſi totius fulcrum & propugnaculum, ſolenne ſemper fuit totam convertere argumentorum molem & ingeniorum aciem, hanc præcipuè imputationis juſtitiæ Chriſti Acropolin* Sociniani, Remonſtrantes, & Pontificii *totâ vi aggrediuntur, &, quam argumentis & rationibus peßundare non poſſunt & labefactare, calumniis onerant & dicteriis inſectantur, quæ ſingula ſi recenſerem, & patientiæ veſtræ laſsitudinem, & piis auribus nauſeam & tædium crearem.* Pontificii, *ad unum penè omnes, hanc juſtitiam imputativam ut putativam & imaginariam ſugillant.* Bellarminus(*tom.* 4. *c.* 7. *l.* 2.) *imputationis dogma ut* ἄχαρον, quod nullum in Scripturis aut Patribus teſtimonium habeat, *ut* non neceſſarium, *ut* abſurdiſsimum, *ut* rectæ rationi contrarium *inſectatur. Ingenioſus iſte nequam* Caſtellio, *in* Tractatu de Juſtificatione, *hanc* imputativam *juſtitiam ut* imaginariam, *pag.* 17. *ut* inane nomen juſtitiæ, *pag.* 31. *ut* carni ſuavem *calumniatur.* Leſſius, *ejuſdem farinæ homuncio, in* conſultatione de Relig. conſideratione 3. *inter alios noſtræ Religionis Articulos pietati (uti contendit) contrarios, hunc de juſtitia* imputata *enumerat*, quaſi neceſſe eſſet ut omnem Dei timorem excutiant, dum docent (*ipſius ſunt verba*) per fidem peccata non imputari, quantumvis ea ſunt multa vel magna. Andradius *eam vocat* amentiſſimam inſaniam, *pag.* 477. *in* defenſione fidei Tridentinæ. Sanderus *dicit hanc imputationem* officere gloriæ Dei & Chriſti. Salmero *rejicit ut* ſuperfluam, *ut* ſuperbiæ matrem, quia, *inquit*, ponit ſervos Domini ſui gloriam uſurpare. Rainoldus *eam vocat* Mathematicum ſolifidivum commentum, *p.* 324. contra Whitakerum

nostrum. *Quin insuper eos omnes anathematis fulmine percutit* conventus Tridentinus (*sess.6.can.*10.) *qui dixerint homines per justitiam Christi formaliter esse justos. At in hanc Christi justitiam paulò iniquiores extiterunt, jurati illi Christi hostes,* Sociniani. Socinus *ipse parte* 4.*c.*4. de Christo Servatore, *commentum vocat justitiæ Christi nobis imputatæ,* quam nec Moses nec Paulus nè somniavit quidem; *cap.* 1. *ejusdem libri,* Commentum, *inquit,* ut valde absurdum atque impium, ità intolerabile; *c.* 8. Non ipsis solùm sacris litteris, sed rationi planè repugnat; *& cap.* 1. *dicit nos* huic opinioni adhærere cum salutis nostræ discrimine, adeò fœda atque execrabilis est, ut pestilentiorem errorem post homines natos extitisse non credam. Smalcius, *Magistrum secutus, hanc doctrinâ vocat* Satanæ impostură. *Horum vestigia premunt* Remonstrantes, *unum pro omnibus accipite* Episcopium, *qui,* concione secundâ, *pag.*437. de causis incredulitatis Judæorum, *tria enumerat doctrinæ nostræ capita, viz.* Trinitatis, absolutæ prædestinationis, *&* justificationis per justitiam Christi, quæ impedimento esse Judæis & offendiculo *ait,* quò minùs fidem Christianam amplectantur, quasi per hanc justitiam imputativam actum esset de legis obedientia & studio bonorũ operum; & reverà, *inquit,* ità se res habet: *& posset certè Apostolus & viro* Arminiano *&* Judæis *satisfacere, qui sæpius de industria justificationis doctrinam ab hac criminatione liberat, ad* Rom. 3. 31. Legem igitur inutilem reddimus per fidem? absit, imò legem stabilimus; *& cap.*8.4. *dicit Apostolus per Christi justitiam legem in nobis compleri.*

Audivistis, Academici, *homines ad convitia ingeniosos satis, qui fortiter calumniari didicerunt, ut tandem aliquid hæreat. Aggredior quæstionem, utì perscentiscitis, criminationibus vexatam, calumniis onustam & penè obrutam; quæ efficere potuissent, ut causæ prævaricarer, nisi præluxisset mihi Scripturæ lumen, quo, vel in thesi, vel inter disputandum, totam illam calumniarum noctem, quam huic veritati offundunt hujus seculi tenebriones, discutere nullus dubito. Quinetiam gratiam divinam & misericordiam, quâ, cùm primævâ justitiâ excideramus, vicariam hanc Christi justitiam credentibus nobis præparavit, acceptat, ac in justitiam imputat, ex intimo corde non possum non suscipere & amplecti: neque facilè mihi persuaserim veritatem ex eorum partibus stare, qui suæ quasi diffisi causæ mallent aliorum opiniones vellicare & contumeliis proscindere (quæ* Socinianorum *in singulis Religionis capitibus consuetudo est) quàm suam argumentis evincere & statuminare. Assero igitur (obtrectantibus licèt Hæreticis)* totam Christi justitiam imputari credentibus ad justificationem: *Quam ut felicius veritatem explicem, proponam*

1. *Terminorum explicationem;* 2. *Quæstionis statum;* 3. *Conclusiones & argumentorum momenta. Quæ singula eâ, quam rei majestas*

jeſtas patitur, brevitate, &, quam noſtra tenuitas, perſpicuitate abſolvam. Quod ad terminos attinet:

Primò, per juſtitiam Chriſti *intelligi velim non* eſſentialem *illam &* Oſiandricam *Chriſti, viz. quâ Deus eſt, ſed* mediatoriam, *quâ* Θεάνθρωπος *Mediator & Sponſor noſter extitit, quæ ſæpius in Scriptura vocatur* juſtitia Dei, *ut Rom.* 1. 17. *&* 10. 3. *viz. vel ratione* gratuitæ donationis, *&* acceptationis, *quippe quæ ſola in judicio Dei valet, vel* perfectæ adæquationis ad divinam voluntatem, *vel* revelationis, *quippe de qua acutiſſimi Philoſophi nè ſomniârunt unquam, vel* originis, *quippe à Chriſto præſtita, qui & Deus & homo erat, vocatur juſtitia Chriſti ſubjectivè,* juſtitia fidei *Phil.* 3. 9. *inſtrumentaliter & objectivè, de quo fuſiùs agemus poſteá.*

Secundò, terminus iſte tota *non ſumitur in quæſtione extenſivè, & quoad meriti & efficaciæ latitudinem, ità enim unicuique credenti non imputatur, ſed limitatè, ut pretium particulare, & quantum credentis poſtulat neceſsitas. Unde obiter conſtabit quàm inanis eſt iſta* Bellarmini *calumnia, quâ hanc imputationem proſequitur, quaſi nos nimirum Chriſto pares & ex æquo juſtos eſſe exinde ſequeretur, & verè nos dici poſſe Redemptores & Mediatores: In promptu eſt reſponſio, viz. Juſtitiam Chriſti quam longiſsimè ſuperare* Adami, *omniúmque creaturarum juſtitiam, & ejus ſatisfactionem & mortem eſſe univerſale omnibus credentibus redemptionis pretium, at fide recipi ſolùm, in quantum ſufficit ad particularis hominis juſtificationem; perinde cum Chriſto juſtos* credentes *dicimus, quoad veritatem, non quantitatem & ſubjectum; deinde Mediator eſt nomen officii; cujus nos participes non ſumus, ſed juſtitiæ ex actibus mediatoriis reſultantis. Per* totam *igitur* juſtitiam *intelligimus tum* activam, *impletionem viz. legis à Chriſto præſtitam, à cujus exactiſsima obedientia nè tantillum per totam vitam deflexerit, tum* paſsivam, *per quam intelligi velim non nudam corporis mortem, cui tamen in Scriptura ſæpius juſtificatio noſtra Synechdochicè &* καθ' ἐξοχὴν *attribuitur, utpote extremæ obedientiæ complemento, ſine qua nihil nobis obedientia Chriſti profuiſſet (utpote quam lex violata indiſpenſabiliter vel à peccatore vel ſponſore poſtulabat) ſed totam Chriſti humiliationem, ipſam formæ humilis & ſervi aſſumptionem, omnésque & corporis ærumnas animíque dolores, quos à primis incunabulis ad glorificationem uſque pertulit, quos noſtro loco ferebat, ut per utramque juſtitiam tum mandatis tum minis legis omni ex parte ſatisfiat. Neq; eſt quare* habitualem *ſeu* originalem *Chriſti juſtitiam, quâ tota humanitas Chriſti à prima conceptione perfuſa erat, à juſtificatione noſtra (quod nonnulli faciunt Theologi) excludamus, cùm hæc nativæ noſtræ corruptioni, utì* activa *peccatis actualibus, &* paſſiva *pœnis, quas commeruëramus & ex rigore legis luere debuiſſemus, aptiſsimè reſpondeat. Monendum hìc eſt hanc diſtinctionem eſſe modalem, ſeu eiuſdem rei in diverſas*

verſas conſiderationes, quippe & impletio legis & perſolutio pœnarum unicam de integro conſtituunt juſtitiam quâ juſtificamur, ad quam non valet ipſa Chriſti paſsio, niſi ut voluntariè ſuſcepta & præſtita, & in tantum activæ *nomen meretur,* γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου--- *inquit Apoſtolus, Phil.* 2.8.

Tertiò, Imputatur] Imputationis *naturam apertiſsimè explicat* Davenantius; Res imputantur(*inquit p.*372.) quando illarũ intuitus & reſpectus valent nobis ad aliquem effectum æquè ac ſi à nobis aut in nobis eſſent: *ità ex intuitu noſtri peccati, quod Chriſto imputabatur, cum Chriſto Deus egit, licèt innocentiſsimo, ac ſi reverà peccator fuiſſet: ità imputatâ nobis Chriſti juſtitiâ, nobiſcum agit Deus ac ſi juſti eſſemus. Ex intuitu* activæ obedientiæ *nos reſpicit, ac ſi propriis perſonis legem impleviſſemus; & ex intuitu* paſſivæ, *ac ſi pœnas peccato debitas dediſſemus. ideóque per* juſtitiam *Chriſti* imputatam *nihil aliud intelligimus quàm eam donatam nobis & applicatam ad ſpiritualem aliquem effectum producendum; utì perſolutio debiti à ſponſore facta à creditore ità debitori imputatur, ut ejus reſpectu debitorem manumittit, perinde ac ſi ipſe ſolviſſet debitum. Huic reſpondet verbum Græcum* λογίζεσθαι, *de quo, mirum quantas!* Pontificii *rixas movent: ſed, modò rem tenemus, abſint* λογομαχίαι, *quibus veſtra vetat patientia nè longiùs immorarer. Hinc obiter conſtare poteſt, quàm protervè & malitioſè nobiſcum agunt* Pontificii, *quaſi* imaginariam *ſolùm poneremus* juſtitiam, *ut* juſtificationis noſtræ materiam *coram Deo; &* imputationem, nudam *ſolummodo* exiſtimationem, *quod in nos urget* Bellarminus, *qui ſemper opponit* verè *&* imputativè: *&* Caſtellio *noſtros exagitat Theologos ut Chriſti modeſtiâ, vel opinione modeſtos nos eſſe, ut Chriſti juſtitiâ juſtos; pag.* 32. *Abſurdiſsimum viz. exiſtimant, aliquem alienâ juſtitiâ juſtum fore. At meræ hæ nugæ ſunt, & deliria: non enim aſſerimus nos juſtos juſtitiâ prorſus alienâ, ſed quæ verè ſit noſtra, veritate* imputationis, *licèt non* inhæſionis: *& hanc* imputationem *eſſe* exiſtimationem, *cui veritas in re ipſa reſpondet; & hanc* juſtitiam *realiter fieri noſtram;* 1. donatione; 2. promiſſione; 3. acceptatione Dei; 4. applicatione fidei, *quæ* realis *eſt, non* putativa: *hæc* imputatio *cauſam habet realem*, Dei *viz.* fœdus & voluntatem; *fundamentum reale, nimirum Chriſti* perfectiſſimam obedientiam *noſtro loco præſtitam, & à nobis propter noſtram cum Chriſto unionem participatam, ob quam juſti habemur coram Deo, non quidem* inhæſivè, *ſed* per habitudinem *ad Chriſtum, cujus juſtitia ſit noſtra ex parte Dei* per imputationem, *ex parte noſtra* per fidem: *ideò additur in quæſtione*

Quartò, Credentibus] *Qui terminus quadruplicem habet emphaſin & vim in præſenti quæſtione.*

Primò, ut dicat inſtrumentum: *non enim dicimus* fidem juſtificare

formaliter *cum* Socinianis, *neque* diſpoſitivè *ſolùm cum* Pontificiis; *ſed* per medium inſtrumenti, *non quidem naturalis, ſed ex divina ordinatione, quâ ex ſumma ſapientia inſtituebat hoc juſtificationis medium, viz.* fidem, *quæ paſſivam & receptivam habet aptitudinem reſpectu objecti juſtificationis præ aliis omnibus virtutibus.*

Secundò, ut dicat actum fidei: *non enim amplector* Maccovii *ſententiam, aſſerentis,* fidem habitualem illud eſſe, quo juſtificamur, *pag.* 770. *quia fides non aliter juſtificat quàm relativè, & connotativè ad objectum; aliter enim ſuo merito, propriâque virtute juſtificaret, aſt notum eſt, habitus nullum dicere reſpectum ad objecta, niſi mediantibus actibus. Unde obiter etiam monere poſsim, me nihil de infantum juſtificatione impræſentiarum determinaturum, quippe quibus juſtificationis privilegium modo quodam latentiori communicatur.*

Tertiò, ut dicat momentum juſtificationis noſtræ; *viz. quamprimùm in Chriſto credimus: non enim iis aſſentior, qui* juſtificationem *ponunt* fidei antecedaneam, *nimirum, vel ab æterno, vel pretii per Chriſti mortem perſolutio, vel ab ipſo tempore quo Chriſtus promiſſus nobis eſt in Mediatorem, Gen.* 3.15. *quæ* Maccovii *opinio eſt, qui fidem non aliter juſtificare exiſtimat, quàm quoad ſenſum noſtrum, quòd nimirum fide cognoſcimus, & ſentimus nos eſſe juſtos coram Deo, pag.* 792. *quippe Scriptura judicat omnes, ut filios iræ, antecedenter ad fidem, Epheſ.* 2.3. *quid? quòd opera, aliæque virtutes, ut juſtificationis* κατηχεια, *nos juſtos declarant coram Deo. Agnoſcimus* virtualem juſtificationem, *quoad præſcientiam & voluntatem divinam ab æterno, meritoriam pretio perſoluto, at* actualem & formalem juſtificationem *antecedenter ad fidem non agnoſcimus. Neque enim* decretum juſtificationis *eſt ipſa juſtificatio, neque ad hanc ſufficit pretii datio: quo modo noſtram* Socinus *deridiculo habet fidem, quaſi fide diceremus nos credere dari, quod jam à Chriſto datum eſt,* (*p.* 4. *c.* 3.) *cùm tamen nos profitemur fide opus eſſe, non* ad ſolutionem *ſed* ad applicationem: *non eſt idem* juſtitiam imputari, *&* Chriſtum pro nobis juſtum eſſe: *quæ duo tamen* Socinus *peſsimè confundit, qui arguit à poſitione ſatisfactionis ad negationem imputationis, licèt enim priùs per Chriſtum parta eſt juſtitia, nobis tamen non cedit in juſtificationem, priuſquàm fide applicamus. Res ſimili conſtabit: ut quis debitor abſolvatur, requiritur* 1. *ut ſponſor perſolvat debitum.* 2. *ut creditor in ea acquieſcat.* 3. *ut debitor eandem ſolutionem acceptet, & ſibi propriam faciat: ità ut nos rei peccatores abſolvamur à reatu, & juſtificemur, non ſolùm requiritur* perſolutio debiti, *à Chriſto facta, ſed deſideratur inſuper* acceptatio, *&* imputatio Patris, *&* applicatio fidei: *hinc eſt quod ſæpiſsime juſtificatio* fidei *aſcribitur, Rom.* 5. 1. *& paſsim in Scripturis; & quouſque increduli manemus, ira Dei dicitur ſuper nos manere, Joan.* 3. 36.

Quartò, ut deſignet identitatem juſtificationis *ſub utroque Teſta-*

mento, *contra* Socinianum *istud dogma*, De fide in Deum sub Veteri, & in Christum sub Novo Testamento: *Cùm tamen Apostolus ad Rom.* 4. *cùm ver.* 3. *dixisset*, Abrahamum credidisse, & imputatum esse ei ad justitiam: *versibus* 23, 24. *addit*, Scriptum hoc esse propter nos, quibus futurum est, ut imputetur ea. *Unde luculenter constat, eundem modum per eandem fidem utrobique factam peccatoris* justificationem, *qui ultimus quæstionis terminus.*

Quintò, Ad justificationem:] *hoc est*, *ut ejus* justitiæ *participes facti credentes*, *& pro* justis *à Deo habeantur*; *& peccatorum remissionem recipiant*, *ità ut huius intuitu*, *Deus eos & à peccatorum reatu absolvat*, *& justos pronunciet*: (*hæc enim* justificationis *vox includit*, *ut infrà patebit*). *Non dissimulandum est*, *ortas hac etiam de re inter nostros Theologos controversias*; *dum alii remissionem peccatorum asserunt esse effectum imputationis* justitiæ passivæ, *ut* Piscator, *& qui eum sequuntur*: *alii* utriusque justitiæ *effectum esse contendunt*, *ut* Calvinus, *&* Chamierus, *p.* 193. *de quibus infrà erit opportuniter determinandi locus. Interea hæc sufficiant ad terminorum explicationem. Quæstionis statum iam aggredior.*

Sententiæ quatuor de Justificatione.

Quatuor præcipuas & celebriores observavi de imputatione *Doctorũ sententias. Prima est eorum*, *qui* satisfactionis, *&* meriti *Christi ultrò agnoscunt* imputationem, *non autem ut sit nostra coram Deo* justitia, *sed ut valeat ad impetrandam* justitiam inhærentem, *quâ formaliter justificemur*: *hæc* Bellarmini, *& recepta est* Pontificiorum *sententia.*

Sentent. 1.

Sentent. 2.

Secunda est eorum, *qui omnem* justitiæ *Christi* imputationem *de medio tollunt*: *sed* fidem *volunt esse ipsam* justitiam imputatam (*loco illo Apostoli ad Rom.* 4. 4. ἡ πίστις *intellecto*) *quam ex divina acceptilatione perinde valere aiunt cum justitia perfecta*, *& legi omnimodè adæquatâ. Audite ipsum* Socinum, *lib.* 4. *c.* 4. de Servatore: *ubi rationem exhibens quare fides dicitur imputari* Abrahamo: Quia, *inquit*, Deo visum est fidem nostram justitiæ loco nobis ducere: *& cap.* 8. Non aliam, *inquit*, præterea imputationem in salute nostra æterna intervenire agnoscendum, quàm pro justis haberi à Deo, quicunq; ex Christi præscripto, ipsi ex animo obedirent. *Confundunt viz.* Sociniani *fidem cum obedientia.* Smalcius *disp.* 4. *contra* Fratzium, Licèt, *inquit*, fides nostra non mereatur vitam æternam, tamen Deus ità in ea acquiescit, ac si vitam æternam mereatur. *Cui sententiæ affine est illud decantatum* τὸ credere Arminianorum, *hoc solùm* (*quantum ego intelligo*) *cum discrimine*: *quòd* Arminiani *agnoscunt* justitiam *Christi ut* causam meritoriam, *quam* Sociniani *prorsus repudiant. Ipsum*, *si placet*, *audite* Arminium, *Epist. ad* Hypol. Dico, *inquit*, fidem imputari propter Christum & justitiam ejus: In qua enuntiatione fides est objectum imputationis, Christus verò, & obedientia ejus est causa justificationis impetratoria, & meritoria, quia Christus cum obedi-

obedientia ſua eſt objectum noſtræ fidei, & non objectum juſtificationis, & imputationis divinæ, quaſi Deus nobis Chriſti juſtitiam imputat ad juſtitiam, quod fieri nequit. *Hæc* Arminius.

Tertia eſt eorum, qui Chriſtum ſatisfeciſſe, & mortem noſtro loco ſubiiſſe exiſtimant, ità ut hæc loco juſtitiæ nobis imputatur, cujus conſequens ponunt peccatorum remiſſionem, *in qua ſola ſtatuunt juſtificationem noſtram: noſtro autem loco Chriſtum legem impleviſſe, vel ejus* obedientiam activam *imputari ad juſtitiam prorſus negant. Hæc* Piſcatoris, Forbeſii, Wottoni, Windelini, Hammondi, *aliorúmque opinio eſt. Hi ſcilicet, dum pro veritate militant, inſutilem juſtitiæ Chriſti togam dilacerant, & dividunt; dum* Sociniani & Pontificii *propriis ſuperbiunt juſtitiæ pannis: ipſi* Sociniani, *licèt utriuſque imputationem negant & rident, in* activam *tamen vehementiùs invehuntur:* multò magis quàm pœnarum perſolutio *deteſtanda eſt Chriſti juſtitiæ imputatio. Verba ſunt* Socini, *cap.* 4. *lib.* 4. *de* Servatore. *Sentent.* 3.

Quarta eſt eorum, qui utriuſque juſtitiæ imputationem propugnant, & tuentur, & quòd utraq; ſit noſtræ juſtificationis materia coram Deo, & eodem prorſus modo imputata credentibus, ideò, Deus ut reſpicit credentes in Chriſto moriente, quaſi ipſi dediſſent pœnas; ità in eodem Sponſore Chriſto, legem adimplente, quaſi ipſi perfectè impleviſſent, & utraque ſimul ad perfectam juſtificationem imputatur. Fatentur quotquot ſunt Theologi activæ obedientiæ *neceſſitatem.* Sociniani, *ad exemplum. 2. Alii, ut ſit conditio requiſita in perſona Mediatoris & Sacerdotis. 3. Ut ob hanc ſincera noſtra obedientia grata Deo ſit, & accepta: ità* Hammondus. 4. *Ut ſit noſtra coram Deo juſtitia à Deo donata loco noſtro præſtita, & fide apprehenſa & applicata: hæc doctiſſimorum Theologorum mens eſt, & ſententia;* Chamieri, Maccovii, Scarpii, Polani, Riveti, Gomari, Dounami, &c. *et, unius inſtar omnium,* Davenantii. *Quibus ego inpræſentiarum meum adjicio calculum, dum aſſero,* Totam Chriſti juſtitiam credentibus imputari ad juſtificationem. *Hæc breviter et ſuccinctè de quæſtionis ſtatu: ſequuntur quatuor concluſiones pari brevitate diſcutiendæ.* *Sentent.* 4

Prima Concluſio. Juſtitia noſtra non valet ad juſtificationem coram Deo. *Cùm autem ea duplex eſt,* Habitualis, *ſive* inhærens; Actualis *et* exercita: *utramque excludimus ab aliqua* cauſalitate, *ſive* efficiente, *ſive* formali *in noſtra juſtificatione. In hac concluſione litem intendimus* Pontificiis, *qui* Concilium Tridentinum *ſequuti,* juſtitiam inhærentem *et* operum *ſtatuunt* juſtificationis *noſtræ* cauſam *coram Deo, dum noſtram de* imputatione *doctrinam vellicant; ac ſi omnẽ prorſus* juſtitiam inhærentem, *et ſtudium* ſanctitatis *inane redderet, et fruſtraneum. Hoc jacto priùs fundamento, procedit tota* Caſtellionis *diſputatio de* juſtificatione, *qui (quaſi nos omnem* realem juſtitiam *de medio tolleremus) dicit, pag.* 13. Hoc oſtendere Chriſti vel infirmi- *Concluſ.* 1.

tatem, si non posset; vel malignitatem, si non vult nos inhærenter & verè justos efficere.

Eâdem nostram onerat sententiam calumniâ Socinus, *lib.* 4. *cap.* 4. *de* Servatore: Ut salvi simus, *inquit*, non necesse est, ut à vitiis verè abstineamus, sed ut abstinuisse censeamur. *Ut utrique calumniæ occurramus, has brevissimè propono Theses et Theoremata.*

Thesis 1. *Primò dicimus, Inseparabiliter conjunctam esse justitiam* imputativam, *et* inhærentem: *et Christum simul factum esse credenti et* justificationem *et* sanctificationem, *affirmante Apostolo,* 1 Cor. 1. 30.

Thes. 2. *Secundò dicimus, Frustra & temerariè sibi de justitia Christi adblandiri, qui sanctitati operam non dat, & studio bonorum operum: quippe* fidem *istam, quâ Christus apprehenditur, profitemur cum Apostolo esse* operantem per charitatem, Gal. 5. 6.

Thes. 3. *Tertiò dicimus, Per utramque justitiam,* inhærentem *viz.* & imputatam *nos verè justos denominari: hâc relativè & perfectè, illâ inchoatè, subjectivè, & imperfectè.*

Thes. 4. *Quartò, Agnoscimus justitiæ* inhærenti & actuali *suam conferri mercedem, non autem* ex merito *sed* ex gratia.

Thes. 5. *Quintò, Fatemur hanc justitiam valere ad nostram justificationem* coram hominibus, *quippe quæ fructus, &* τεκμήριον *est justificationis; licèt non* coram Deo: *quam distinctionem apertissimè innuit Apostolus,* Gal. 3. 11. ἐν νόμῳ οὐδεὶς δικαιοῦται παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ: *operibus legis declarativè justificari coram hominibus nusquam negat Apostolus.*

Thes. 6. *Sextò dicimus, Hanc justitiam Deo placere & gratam esse, non autem ex* suo merito & dignitate, *sed ut* effectus Spiritûs, *& ex gratia Dei, ob meritum, & justitiam Mediatoris.*

Thes. 7. *Septimò, Agnoscimus justitiam operum esse* ornamentum conversationis, necessaria antecedentia salutis, fructus fidei justificantis, *cui tum ex legis, & voluntatis divinæ obligatione, tum ex debito gratitudinis studere debemus. Interim,*

Thes. 8. *Octavò, Negamus hanc justitiam esse* formam *nostræ justificationis, vel eam, ob quam Deus nos justos pronuntiat, & ad vitam æternam acceptare dignatur. Idque hoc duplici ducti argumento:*

Arg. 1. 1. *Hæc sententia* Pontificiorum *repugnat & voci, & naturæ justificationis, quæ passim in Scripturis designat* forensem, & judicialem absolutionem, & acceptationem, *non* infusionem inhærentis justitiæ: *si enim hoc præ se fert justificatio, opus Deo gratum proculdubio efficeret, quàm quod gratissimum, qui impium justificaret, qui tamen,* Prov. 17. 15. *dicitur esse abominationi Jehovah.* Pontificiis *etiam repugnat vis vocis Græcæ* δικαιῶν, *quæ semper denotat* sententiæ pronuntiationem, *non* justitiæ infusionem, *utpote quæ in Scripturis opponitur* τῷ κατακρίνειν & ἐγκαλεῖν, in judicium vocare, & condemnare; *at quis sanus affirmaret* condemnationem esse injustitiæ infusionem, &

& non potiùs morti adjudicationem, *cui cùm ex diametro opponitur* juſtificatio, *neceſſariò deſignat non* infuſionem, *ſed* abſolutionem *à reatu, &* acceptationem *ad vitam.*

II. Non valet noſtra juſtitia ad juſtificationem coram Deo, quia ea omnia, quæ in ea juſtitia, quâ poſsimus in conſpectu Dei juſtificari, requiruntur, in noſtra quali quali juſtitia deſiderantur. In ea enim, quâ quis juſtificari poteſt, juſtitia requiritur: Arg. 2.

1. *Omnimoda & abſolutiſsima* perfectio, *quam poſtulat tum Dei ſanctitas, tum legis indiſpenſabilis obligatio.*

2. Adæquatio *ad legem, & voluntatem divinam: eáque tum,* 1. Extenſiva, *tum ratione* objecti, *præceptorum viz. &* negativorum, *quibus opponuntur* commiſſionis *peccata; &* affirmativorum, *quibus repugnant* omiſſiones; *Apoſtolus enim eum reum factum eſſe omnium pronuntiat, qui in uno impegerit,* Jacob. 2. 10. *tum ratione* temporis *&* durationis. *Ei enimvero, qui ſemel à legis norma aberraverit, ut per legem juſtificetur impoſsibile prorſus eſt, quippe qui, juxta legis rigorem & ſententiam, morti et condemnationi adjudicatur,* Gal. 3. 10. *neque poteſt noſtra perfectiſsima juſtitia injuriam divinæ Majeſtati per minimam legis tranſgreſsionem illatam compenſare.* 2. Intenſiva, *ratione* ſubjecti, *ut fiat toto corde, et totâ animâ, ut nè tantillum à debita intenſione deficiat: nullibi autem reperiri tam perfectam juſtitiam, ut pleniſsimè demonſtremus, fidenter appellamus Scripturas, et ſanctiſsimorum hominum conſcientias. Scripturæ eum* mendacem *pronuntiant,* qui ſe peccatum habere non dixerit, 1 Joan. 1. 8. *Suppoſito autem vel ſemel commiſſo peccato, perfectiſsima noſtra obedientia ejus reatum tollere non poteſt: quid? quòd juſtitia noſtra* inhærens *reliquiis peccati fœdatur, et juſtitia* operum *plurimis laborat infirmitatibus,* πολλαὶ γὰρ πταίομεν ἅπαντες, *inquit Apoſtolus,* Jac. 3. 2. *Quòd ſi Sanctorum experientiam atteſtamur,* Davidem *videre eſt Dei ſeveritatẽ ſeriò deprecantem,* Pſal. 143. 2. Nè congrediaris, *inquit,* in judicio cum ſervo tuo, nam non eſſet juſtus coram te ullus vivens. Paulum *habemus ſe confitentem* peccatorum maximum, 1 Tim. 1. 15. *Imò ſe fatetur exindè* non juſtificari, licèt nullius rei ſibi conſcius eſt, 1 Cor. 4. 4. Jobum, Danielem *habemus in Scripturis peccata ſua confitentes:* Paulum *ſæpius juſtitiæ ſuæ renuntiantem,* Phil. 3. 8, 9. *Imò totam Eccleſiam legimus, ſuam æſtimantem juſtitiam, ut* pannículum abjectiſſimum, Iſa. 64. 6. *Imò, ipſos teſtes advocamus adverſarios, qui non auſi ſint in ſua juſtitia coram tribunali Dei ſe ſiſtere. Notum eſt illud* Bellarmini, Tutiſſimum eſt, &c. *At multiplex habent adverſarii refugium:* Pontificii *dicunt,* Scripturas à juſtificatione excludere ſolùm opera legis Cæremonialis, vel à natura præſtitas. *Cui opinioni repugnat quod Apoſtolus opera credentis* Abrahami *à juſtificatione removet, ad* Rom. 4. 3. *At Chriſti merito debemus (inquiunt* Pontificii) *quòd hæc juſtitia valeat ad*

justificationem; *at hoc reverà elevat meritum, & justitiam Christi, quasi ad nostram redemptionem per se non sufficeret. Confugiunt denique ad* acceptilationem divinam, *quasi propter Christi justitiam Deus nostram, imperfectam licèt justitiam, loco perfectæ haberet; quæ opinio necessariò ponit, vel* legis, *ex parte saltem,* abrogationem, *quasi eam, quam priùs, justitiam non postularet; vel* Deum *insinuat* fallibilis judicii, *& falsæ exist*imationis, *quippe qui imperfectam loco perfectæ justitiæ duceret, quod parùm abest à blasphemia,* Rom. 2 2.

Conclus. 2. *Conclusio secunda.* Justificatio peccatoris coram Deo fit per imputationem justitiæ: *cujus conclusionis veritas ex antedictis patet; quippe cùm* inhærens justitia *impar sit ad hunc effectum producendum, opus erit justitiâ alienâ, & nobis imputatâ: tertium enim justificationis modum Adversariorum acutissimi excogitare non potuerunt. Hæc conclusio contra eos militat, qui* justificationis *naturam in solitaria & nuda* peccatorum remissione *ponunt, quæ* Piscatoris *sententia est, & aliorum, quotquot sunt, omnium, qui activæ Christi obedientiæ imputationem negant. Ultrò fatemur, peccatorum remissionem esse partem justificationis integrantem, & cum imputatione inseparabiliter conjunctam, at solam remissionem ad nostram justificationem sufficere negamus; tum quia Scripturæ sæpiùs loquuntur de remissione & imputatione, ut distinctis per Christum impetratis, & collatis beneficiis: ut videre est ad* Rom. 4. 7,8. *utì olim de Christo* Daniel *prophetavit: fore viz.* ut expiet iniquitatem, & adducat justitiam perpetuam, Dan. 9. 24. *Neutra per se valet ad nostram justificationem & salutem.* Pœnæ, *quam commeruimus, respondet* peccatorum remissio; culpæ, *quam contraximus,* iustitiæ imputatio: *per* remissionem *tollitur* obligatio *ad* mortem; *per* imputationem *communicatur* justitia *ad* vitam: remissio *liberat à* damnatione; imputatio justitiæ *dat* jus *ad* salutem: remissio *efficit non* injustos, imputatio *verè* justos, *quod indispensabiliter requiritur, ut vitam assequamur:* remissio *peccati* reatum *tollit, non* maculam; *hæc autem ut removeatur necessum est, priusquam possidere possumus istud cœleste regnum, in quod non intrabit quidquam, quod inquinat,* Apoc. 21. 27. *Ipsi* Adamo *vitam non debebatur, ex eo quòd* reatûs *expers fuit; sed ex perfectæ* obedientiæ, *& perseverantis* justitiæ *conditione. Cujus in Protoplasto defectum sequuta est, & in totam posteritatem derivata, & obligatio ad omne genus mortem, omnisque justitiæ privatio. Cui duplici malo medetur* peccatorum remissio, *quæ tollit* obligationem *ad* mortem, *&* justitiæ imputatio, *quæ primævæ* rectitudinis *& perfectæ* obedientiæ *locum & vim supplet. Supponamus hominem per* non imputationem peccatorum *restitui in pristinum statum, quo culpâ vacabat, & unde per peccatum exciderat, at in isto statu desiderabatur insuper perfecta & illibata sanctimonia, & legis impletio (quam etiamnum ad vitam æternam postulant Dei sanctitas*

ctitas, legis obligatio, cœlestis hæreditatis conditio, & qualitas) quam cùm nos præstare non possumus, aptus erit alterius, Mediatoris viz. justitiâ imputatâ, quâ coram Deo justi habeamur, & ad vitam æternam acceptemur; quod fit, non solùm adoption[illegible]*re, & titulo; sed* justificationis, *quam ideo vocat Apostolus* [illegible] ζωῆς, Rom. 5. 18.

Conclusio tertia. Justificatio peccatoris fit per imputationem justitiæ Christi: *quam imputationem acriter impugnat* Bellarminus, *lib. 2. cap. 7. de* justificat. *& quasi* ἄχαφον dogma *une ord clamitant* Pontificii, *&* Sociniani. *Paucis igitur videamus, quibus & Scripturæ testimoniis, & rationum momentis statuminari possit hæc sententia. Passim depradicat Scriptura illam justitiam nostram, & nos in ea justos pronuntiat, quod aliter quam per imputationem fieri* ἀλογον *prorsus & impossibile. Hinc Christus factus dicitur credentibus* δικαιοσύνη, 1 Cor. 1. 30. *non inhærenter, vel effectivè solùm, illud enim in proximo termino exprimitur, cùm Christus factus nobis dicitur* ἁγιασμὸς *sanctificatio: beatum eum depradicat* David, *cui Deus justitiam imputat, ut ab Apostolo citatur,* Rom. 4. 6. *Non nostram intelligit Apostolus, quippe imputari dicitur* χωρὶς ἔργων, *absque operibus; & Deus justificare dicitur* ἀ πίστιν, *v.* 5. *ergo non ex propria justitia intuitu. Ità* Rom. 5. 18. *dicimur justi constituti* δι' ὑὸς δικαιώματος, *sive unius hominis, viz. Christi; vel unam justitiam,* hoc est, *perfectam & consummatam intelligamus perinde est, quippe utroque modo Christi imputatam justitiam designat: Ità* 2 Cor. 5. 21. *fieri dicimur* δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ, *non inhærenter in nobis, sed in Christo imputativè, hinc sæpius repetita Prophetarum vaticinia de Christo, justitiâ nostrâ,* Jer. 33. 16. 23. 6. &c. *Hinc etiam* justificatio per Christum *semper opponitur* operibus legis, *&* justitiæ nostræ: *quid? quòd ea, quâ justificamur, justitia* δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ *sæpius appellatur, non causativè solùm, ità enim legis justitia, & inhærens Dei est justitia, cui tamen è diametro sæpius opponitur, quod ad justificationem attinet, fidei, & Christi justitia, ut apertissimè constat ex* Phil. 3. 9. *& cùm justitia Christi ea sola sit, quæ perfectæ & justitiæ divinæ respondeat, & legi adæquatur, & quâ solùm induti, fidenter possumus coram tribunali Dei comparere, ea utique erit justificationis nostræ causa, quæ tamen nostra fieri aliter non potest, quàm per imputationem: fusiùs explicat hoc Scripura duplici factâ comparatione, & analogiâ.* *Conclus. 3.*

1. Ex *comparatione primi & secundi* Adami, *quam apertissimè insinuat Apostolus,* Rom. 5. versib. 12, 18, 19. Sicut per unum hominem peccatum introiit in mundum, & per peccatum mors: & sicut per unam offensam reatus venit in omnes homines in condemnationem; ità per unius justitiam beneficium redundat in omnes homines

homines ad justificationem vitæ. Sicut enim per contumaciam unius hominis peccatores constituti sunt multi; ità per unius obedientiam justi constituentur multi. *Ad cujus commatis explicationem hæc monenda sunt:* 1°. *Apostolum instituere comparationem inter primum & secundum* Adamum, *ut duo hominum capita, & personas publicas; hunc posterorum omnium, illum singulorum credentium.* 2°. *inter modum communicationis* Adami inobedientiæ *& Christi* justitiæ. *At* Adami peccatum nostrum fit per propagationem *respondet* Bellarminus: *fatemur nativam corruptionem transire in nos per propagationem, at reatum primi actûs peccaminosi nobis imputari. Causalis enim propagatio peccati non impedit imputationem, quatenus nos Deus respexit, ut in* Adamo *peccantes: pari ratione utramq; justitiam & inhærentem, & imputatam habemus à Christo; at hanc absolutionis & justificationis causam asserimus, non illam.* 3°. *Utriq; par ratio, & fundamentum communicationis:* 1. *Quòd* Adami *peccatum imputetur posteris provenit à nostra cum eo, ut defectionis capite, unione.* 2. *Ob fœdus cum* Adamo, *ejúsque posteris initum. Ità fundamentum & ratio imputationis justitiæ Christi duplex est:* 1. *Unio nostra cum Christo per fidem.* 2. *Fœdus inter Patrem et Christum sancitum de opere redemptionis peragendo, quo Christus se sistit ut sponsorem, et fide-jussorem nostrum; unde fit, ut ejus justitia à Deo, ut nostra, et nostro loco præstita habeatur, proindéque nobis imputetur.*

2°. *Ex* analogiâ modi, *quo Christus factus est* peccatum *pro* nobis, *et* nos *in eo* justitia. *Hanc comparationem innuit Apostolus,* 2 Cor. 5. 21. Fecit enim, ut qui peccatum non novit, pro nobis peccatum esset, ut nos efficeremur justitia Dei in eo. *Qui Christum peccatorem factum esse inhærenter asserit, blasphemus erit, et satisfactionis meritum tollit: qui peccatum hoc in loco exponunt victimam et sacrificium pro peccato, non multùm ab Apostoli scopo aberrare videntur. Interim affirmamus, ut fiat victima, necessum fore, ut nostra ei imputarentur peccata (unde* cum defectoribus *Christum* annumeratum *fuisse legimus,* Isa. 53. 12.) *prout omnia populi peccata* hirco emissario *imposita fuisse constat,* Levitic. 16. 21, 22. *Ut summatim igitur hoc contrahamus argumentum: Christus* imputativè *pro nobis factus est* peccatum; *ergo nos in eo* imputativè justi *constituti sumus. Hanc conclusionem ponimus.*

1°. *Contra istud τὸ credere* Arminianorum, *quorum vestigia (ut in aliis Theologiæ capitibus ità in hoc) premit* Goodwinus *in peculiari* tractatu, *quo fidei imputationem in sensu proprio probare conatur; ac si instar legalis et perfectæ justitiæ à Deo æstimaretur ipse credendi actus: dum locum istum ad* Roman. 4. 3. *literaliter intelligunt;* Credidit Abraham Deo, & imputatum est ei ad justitiam. *Quo in loco fidem* materialiter *intelligendum non esse, quasi merito et dignitati fidei debebatur*

debebatur Abrahami *juſtificatio*: *ſed* relativè, *quòd credenti juſtitia fuit gratis imputata, ideóque* ver. 11. δικαιοσύνη τῆς πίστεως, *hoc eſt* fide apprehenſa, *vocatur*; *vel* organicè, *quòd* Abraham *fide acceperit juſtitiam à Deo gratis donatam: hæc abunde ſatis evincunt, ut fides ſit propriè noſtra coram Deo juſtitia.*

1. *Repugnant iſtæ, quibus noſtra laborat* fides, imperfectiones.

2. *Repugnat* officio & naturæ *fidei, quæ* extrinſecam & alienam *applicat* juſtitiam: *hinc per fidem dicimur* Chriſtum recipere, Ioan. 1. 12. *eáque, quâ juſtificamur, juſtitia dicitur* δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ διὰ πίστεως, Rom. 3. 22. & ὁκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη, Rom. 10. 6. *Fides igitur non eſt* res imputata, *ſed* inſtrumentum applicativum, & receptivum *iſtius juſtitiæ, quâ juſtificamur.*

3. Juſtitia fidei *univerſaliter opponitur* juſtitiæ operum. Ei, qui non operatur, ſed credit, imputatur fides in juſtitiam, Rom. 4. 5. *Ergò fides, quà opus, non valet nec acceptatur ad juſtificationem. Imò Apoſtolus* Paulus ſuæ *nuntium mittit juſtitiæ, ut* fidei *juſtitiam ſtabiliret, ad* Philip. 3. 9. Ut comperiar, *inquit*, non habens meam juſtitiam, ſed eam quæ ex fide: *at verò* τὸ credere *eſt pars juſtitiæ noſtræ.*

4. *Quidni aliæ* virtutes & gratiæ *ad juſtitiam imputarentur æquè ac* fides, *niſi ea* relativè & *ut Chriſti* receptiva *conſideratur? cùm pariter* gratuitæ *repugnarent juſtificationi*, Rom. 11. 6.

5. *Si fides, quà opus, juſtificaret, eſſet vel ſolitariè, vel conjunctim cum juſtitia Chriſti. Si prius dicatur, fruſtranea redditur juſtitia Chriſti: ſi poſterius, imperfecta. Fidem igitur ad juſtitiam imputari, intelligi debet*, metonymicè, relativè, concretivè, *ſeu* connotativè *cum* objecto, *quod apprehendit: Chriſtum viz. & ejus juſtitiam, quæ materia eſt noſtræ juſtificationis coram Deo.*

Secundò, Contra iſtud Socinianorum *dogma, quo ſtatuunt Chriſti imitationem eſſe noſtræ juſtificationis cauſam. Ità* Socinus, (*cap. 6. par. 4. de* Chriſto Servatore.) Juſtificamur, *inquit*, per imitationem Chriſti, quâ nos, ità ut Chriſtus, Deo obedimus: & fidem *ipſam definit eſſe* imperfectam legis obſervantiam. *Ultro fatemur*, Summam religionis eſſe imitari, quem colimus: *at interim hanc* imitationem *ab omni in juſtificatione noſtra* cauſalitate *removemus*, (ornamentum *agnoſcimus* converſationis, *negamus eſſe* inſtrumentum juſtificationis, *non enim per* noſtram obedientiam, *ſed* διὰ τῆς ὑπακοῆς τοῦ ἑνὸς, *nos juſtificari cum Apoſtolo profitemur*, Rom. 5. 19.) *cùm hoc de* imitatione *Chriſti, ut* cauſâ *juſtificationis noſtræ, dogma* & ἄγραφον *eſt*, & ἄλογον, *quod aliter mirum eſſet Apoſtolum tacito ſilentio præteriiſſe, cùm ex induſtria juſtificationis doctrinam tractat.* Smalcius (*in Præfat. Catechiſm.* Racov.) *hoc in* Socinianæ *religionis laudem jactitat, quòd Eccleſiæ ſuæ maximè præ aliis* reformatæ *ſunt à Papatu: quod non minùs inſulſè, quàm ſuperbè dictum eſſe, eorum de* præviis diſpoſitioni-

bus, *de* viribus liberi arbitrii, *de* perfectione hominis in hac vita, *de* concupiscentia, *& alia id genus dogmata, quibus cum* Pontificiis *conspirant, abunde satis testantur. Sin minùs, ex hac, quam præ manibus habemus, doctrinâ* Socinianâ *luculenter constat eos unà cum* Pontificiis *convenire in* articulo justificationis. *Quid enim aliud sonat* Socinianorum *imitatio Christi, quàm* Pontificiorum *justitia, quam venditant,* inhærens, *&* operum? *quam cùm, in* prima conclusione, *satis eventilavimus, pergamus ad quartam & ultimam* conclusionem, *quæ hæc est.*

Concluſ. 4. *Conclusio quarta.* Justificatio peccatoris coram Deo fit per imputationem totius justitiæ Christi; *vel,* tota justitia Christi imputatur credentibus ad justificationem. *In quam conclusionem insurgunt è nostris etiam Theologis nonnulli, qui* satisfactionem, *&* mortem *Christi* imputationem *ultrò fatentur:* justitiam *tamen* activam, *nostro loco præstitam, & in justitiam nobis* imputatam, *ex professo negant. Nos parem utriusque rationem, & necessitatem, tum Scripturæ testimoniis, tum rationum momentis brevissimè demonstrabimus.* Passivæ *obedientiæ imputationem propugnant istæ, quæ Christum se pro nobis* λύτρον ἀντίλυτρον *dedisse affirmant:* activæ *imputationem, sive impletionem legis à Christo factam credentibus imputari, hæ luculenter satis testantur Scripturæ; ad* Rom. 10. 4. *ubi Christus dicitur* τέλος νόμου, εἰς δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι, finis legis in justitiam omni credenti. Finis *legis est eos justificare, qui eam observant, quem* finem *quò minùs assequamur, impedit non* legis *qualitas, sed* carnis nostræ *vitiositas, cui malo medetur Christi obedientia; per quam fide apprehensam hunc* finem *legis consequimur, ut coram Deo justificaremur, ac si in propriis personis perfectissimè implevissemus. Apertissimè explicat hunc locum* Chrysostomus, Ὡς ἂν πιστεύσης ἀυτῷ, *inquit,* κἀκεῖνον ἐπληρώσας πολλῷ γὰρ μείζονα δικαιοσύνην ἔλαβες: *hoc est, Christi justitiam imputatam. ad* Rom. 8. 4. *dicitur* δικαίωμα νόμου: *hoc est,* jus legis in nobis compleri: *non dicit* ὑφ' ἡμῶν, *à nobis, sed* ἐν ἡμῖν, *in nobis: hoc est, ut Christo unitis, & ejus perfectam obedientiam per fidem participantibus.* Δικαίωμα *hìc designat totum illud, quod à nobis lex potuit exigere, viz. tum* pœnæ persolutionem, *tum* perfectam obedientiam, *quam & lex primariò, & jure indispensabili postulat, quam itidem in Scriptura* δικαίωμα *sæpissime designat: ut* Luc. 1. 6. Erant ambo justi in conspectu Dei, incedentes in omnibus ταῖς ἐντολαῖς καὶ δικαιώμασι τοῦ Κυρίου. *Ad* Gal. 4. 4. *Christus dicitur* pro nobis γενόμενος ὑπὸ νόμον, factus sub lege: *hoc est, tum* pœnas *comminante, tum* obedientiam strictam *postulante. Plenissimè ad hanc rem facit illud Apostoli ad* Rom. 5. 18. Δι' ἑνὸς δικαιώματος, per unius justitiam *beneficium dicitur redundans in justificationem, quo in loco* obedientiam *Christi designari constat:* 1. *ex* oppositione *ad Adami* παράπτωμα, *seu peccatum, quod proculdubio erat legis violatio.* 2. *Ex*

termi-

terminis æquipollentibus, ver. 19. διὰ τῆς παρακοῆς τοῦ ἑνὸς, *et* διὰ τῆς ὑπακοῆς τοῦ ἑνὸς: *quæ voces justitiam* activam *&* obedientiam *designant. Unicum superaddam Scripturæ locum,* Matth. 3. 15. *ubi Christus* Joannem *alloquitur,* πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην, decet nos implere omnem justitiam: *qui locus solidissimè nostram firmabit sententiam, si* Chrysostomo *fides habenda est, qui hisce verbis explicat Christi mentem; quasi videlicet dixisset;* ἐμοὶ τῷ διαπαντὸς πρέπον ἐστὶ τῷ ἐχθὲς τὸ καλλωπίζεσθαι ὑφ' ἧς οὐχ ἑκόντων. *Liceat mihi frui patientiâ vestrâ & candore, dum argumentorum, quæ hanc evincunt veritatem, attingo capita.* Obedientiam *Christi* passivam, *seu* satisfactionem *postulabat*

1. Vindicatrix *Dei* justitia, *cui ut satisfiat necessum fuit, priusquam peccator, salvâ Dei justitiâ & veritate, absolvi, & à commeritis pœnis liberari posſit.*

2. Impotentia nostra, *quâ satisfaciendo non eramus pro offensa infiniti demeriti,*

3. *Ut* valeat *nobis* ad justificationem, *requiritur, ut quodammodo fiat* nostra, *quod aliter, quàm per* imputationem *fieri non posſit: hanc autem solùm ad plenam nostram justificationem non sufficere, quin insuper desideretur imputatio justitiæ* activæ, *hæc evidentissimè evincunt.*

Primò, Sponsoris *officium, quod Christum loco nostro subivisse testatur Apostolus ad* Hebr. 7. 22. *In fide-jussore autem duo desiderantur,* 1. *ut* totum *persolvat debitum,* 2. *ut persolvat* loco debitoris, *quem ob hanc solutionem, ac si ipse dedisset, creditor absolvit, & dimittit: ità Christus* vas *&* sponsor *pro nobis factus,* totum, *quo obærati, neque tamen solvendo eramus, persolvit debitum, quod duplex erat,* 1°. Obedientiæ. 2°. Pœnæ: *hoc ex indispensabilis creationis lege, illud ex primo quod commisimus peccato; hoc legi, illud justitiæ divinæ debebamus: utrumque igitur persolvit Christus, & perfectam præstando obedientiam, & mortem, quam lex minabatur peccatoribus, subeundo: utrumque* loco nostro, *ut per satisfactionem nos à maledictione, & damnatione liberaret, quam lex minabatur, & per perfectam obedientiam jus nobis ad salutem acquirat, quam Deus legem factoribus promisit. At Christi obedientiam pro se debitam objiciunt Adversarii, proinde nobis ut imputetur impoſsibile est. Per* hypostaticam *unionem Christum solutum fuisse ab obligatione legis existimant viri acutissimi* Maccovius, *&* Perkinsius. *Sed esto,* debita *licèt sit, potest esse* meritoria *& nobis cedere in justitiam:* 1°. *quia* voluntariè susceptа *sit humana natura, proindéque hæc obedientia erat solùm ex conditione & suppositione necessaria:* 2°. *ob* personæ dignitatem: 3°. *ex* pacto *&* fœdere *cum Patre inito:* 4°. *ex* gratiosa *Patris* acceptatione; *utì Rex filio infensus, placari potest meritis Filii, licèt omnis ejus, ut subditi, observantia sit Regi debita: neque tamen hinc tollitur nostra obedi-*

entia, *ad quam nihilominus tenemur, tum ex indispensabili legis obligatione, tum ut debitum observantiæ & gratitudinis.*

Secundò, Justitia & sanctitas *Dei: illa mortem, hæc obedientiam perfectam postulat; quarum primam cùm ferre non potuimus sine æterno salutis dispendio, nec alteram præstare ob naturæ vitium, & imbecillitatem, Deus credentes respiciat oportet, ut in Christo utramque persolvente, vel in æternum desperent de justificatione & salute.*

Tertiò, *Legis* indispensabilitas *et* perpetua obligatio. *Christus dicit se non venisse ut legem solveret*, Matth. 5. 17. *Imò Apostolus profitetur* legem per fidem stabiliri, Rom. 3. 31. *Lex obedientiam* primariò *postulat*, secundariò & per accidens *pœnam: ergò ex eo, quo Adversarii evincunt satisfactionis, & mortis Christi necessitatem ob legis comminationem, ut nos à morte liberemur, à fortiori colligimus necessitatem perfectæ Christi obedientiæ ob legis mandatum, ex cujus imputatione ad vitam acceptamur. Lex & pœnam, & obedientiam peccatoris postulat*; Hoc fac, & vives; &, In die, quo comederis, morieris. *Lex enim non patitur pœnam, nec justitiam vicariam; hoc Evangelii gratiæ debemus, quòd fide-jussoris Christi obedientia & satisfactio nobis imputatur ad justificationem: si Christum spectamus ex vi, & rigore legis; si nosmetipsos ex gratia, justificationem & salutem consequimur.*

Quartò, *Utriusque imputationem postulat* salus nostra: passivæ, *ut expietur peccatum jam commissum*; activæ, *ut satisfiat legis mandato, & vitæ conditio impleatur: hujus, ut à morte liberemur; illius, ut vitâ & æternitate donemur: neque enim pœna abstractè & solitariè considerata valet ad vitæ meritum & impetrationem, quæ non perpessioni pœnarum, sed* perfectæ obedientiæ *promittitur*, Levit. 18. 5.

Quintò, *Adversariorum sententia elevat* honorem *Christi, ejúsq;* justitiæ *minuit* efficaciam. *Si enim ut nobis præberet obedientiæ exemplũ (quem secundarium obedientiæ Christi usum agnoscimus)* Socinum *sequuti, Christum & satisfeciſſe & impleviſſe legem asseramus; detrahamus &* merito *obedientiæ, & personæ* dignitati: *quippe & viri pii, & Martyres nobis obedientiæ tramitem ostendunt, & sanctitatis exemplum præbent: neque solùm requiritur ut præparatio passivæ, vel conditio personæ Mediatoris, ut victima fiat pro peccatis: ad hoc enim sufficisset originalis vel habitualis Christi justitia, & frustraneum foret Christum vitam duxisse tam sanctam, tot undique miseriis stipatam & intertectam. Quid? quòd & Dei gratiam, & misericordiam, Christi honorem, Christianorum consolationem quàm maximè promovet hæc de justitiæ* activæ *Christi imputatione doctrina: quod fusiùs demonstrandum foret, si temporis, vel patientiæ vestræ dudum lassatæ ratio pateretur. Si qui adsunt, qui hac de re secus sentiunt, facilè mihi persuaserim, ab iis*

me veniam impetraturum, quam, Adverſariorum iniquiſſimus, Socinus *hujus ſententiæ patronis olim indulſit (lib. 8. cap. 4. de* Chriſto Servatore) *cujus verba coronidis loco apponam.* Non multum refert, *inquit*, ſive Chriſti imputatione, ſive quacunque aliâ ratione fieri juſtificatio dicetur, dummodo vitæ ſanctimonia ſalva ſit: *& cap.* 1. Condonabit iſtam opinionem (*de* imputatione *loquitur*) præculdubio benigniſſimus Deus, utpote ab hominis malitia non proficiſcentem, ſi vitæ ſanctimonia, quam à nobis omnino requirit, incolumis remaneat. *At non eſt quare Hæreticorum peſſimus formidet pietatis diſpendium ex imputationis doctrina: niſi eum obſurdeſcerent Hæretici, ad ravim uſque clamamus*, inhærentem juſtitiam *inſeparabiliter cum* imputata *conjunctam, &* ſtudium bonorum operum fructum *&* effectum *aſſerimus* fidei, *quâ hæc juſtitia Chriſti applicatur:* meritum bonorum operum *repudiamus*, uſum *&* neceſſitatem *profitemur*; *excludimus ex* actu *juſtificationis, non* ab homine juſtificato: *interim aſſerimus, Juſtitiam Chriſti ſolùm valere, eámque totam deſiderari ad noſtram juſtificationem, & concludimus,*

Tota Chriſti juſtitia imputatur credentibus ad juſtificationem.

FINIS.

The qualification of a Goſpel-Miniſter:

in a Sermon on,

Acts 18.24.

And a certain Jew, named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, mighty in the Scriptures, came to Epheſus.

NOthing more conduceth to the ſouls comfort, and eſtabliſhment of any Church, then the conſtant preſence of a learned, and the pious example of a religious paſtor: as nothing betrayes people ſooner to ignorance, irreligion, and apoſtacie, then a want or abſence of a judicious and religious miniſter. *Moſes* cannot ſtir from the *Iſraelites* to the mount, though upon neceſſary occaſion of converſe with God, but preſently they fall into Idolatrie, worſhipping the calf: and it is no great wonder if wolves ſhould make a prey of the flock, when they have no ſhepherd. Let itinerarie *non-reſidents* think of this: S. *Paul* was deeply ſenſible of it; and therefore the care of all churches being upon him, which he mentions as an additionall trouble to all his other: when ever the work of the Goſpel called him from any church, he was carefull to leave, or ſend another to them, as *Titus* to *Crete*, and *Timothy* to the *Theſſalonians*, to eſtabliſh and confirm them in the faith: and here, when he was neceſſitated to leave *Epheſus* to go to *Jeruſalem* at the Paſſeover (conceiving that the fitteſt opportunitie to ſpread and propagate the Goſpel there, rather then any other time of the year), he is carefull to ſubſtitute *Apollos*, (in which *Calvin* piouſly admires the providence of God over his church, not to ſuffer it without a ſetled miniſter) who might recompence the loſs of *Paul*, and water that church which he had there planted. *Apollos* I ſay, one fully furniſhed for the work of the Goſpel, and moſt fit for *Epheſus* (*miniſteriall gifts then proving moſt uſefull, when right placed*; the want of which hath rendred many great *Pauls*, and men of eminent abilities unprofitable, uſeleſs, and unſucceſsfull) famous then for Orators, and Philoſophers, *Ut artem arte eluderet*, that as *Julian* the *Apoſtate* cried out when convinced, and *non-pluſs'd* by the reaſons of the *Chriſtians*, τῆς οἰκείοις πλεγεῖς βαλλόμεθα, that they were catch't in their own net, and beaten at their own weapons; ſo *Apollos* here might by his heavenly and raviſhing eloquence,

Exod. 32. 1.

2 Cor. 11. 28

Titus 1. 5.
1 Theſ. 3. 2.

Calvin. *in locum.*

Cor. *in locum*

Theodoret. *lib. 3. cap. 8.*

quence catch them in the net of the Goſpel, who ſo much [b] oaſted of their fleſhly and carnall wiſdome.

Two things are conſiderable in the words.

In locum. Rom. 16. 10.

1. The perſon, *Apollos:* the ſame, if you believe *Grotius*, with that *Apelles* S. *Paul* ſalutes and commends.
2. The qualification: that's twofold,
   1. Ἀνὴρ λόγιος, *An eloquent man.*
   2. Δυνατὸς ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς, *Mighty in the ſcriptures.*

1. The perſon, *Apollos:* of whom I intended to have ſpoken little, or nothing, but that I obſerve the *Church-Levellers* of our time, who would remove the ancient land-marks, pull up the hedges, and lay the miniſterial office open, and in common to all, whoſe confidence, covetouſneſs, or ambition makes them pretend to Gifts; or whom the leſs judicious multitude out of faction, or ſeparation, or envy to the ſetled miniſtery, or affectation of novelty, or weakneſs and raſhneſs ſhall judge *gifted*, though not *called* or *ordained:* they make this inſtance of *Apollos*, as one of their *aſylums* to flee to, whom they alleadge as a *gifted* brother, no *ordained* preacher. Give me leave therefore to ſuggeſt briefly ſome few hints to you, which may lead us into a more full diſcovery of the perſon, and may drive theſe pretenders from that refuge, which they have betaken themſelves to in this inſtance of *Apollos.*

Hiſt. Euſeb. *lib.* 2. *cap.* 16.

1. It is probable that *Apollos* (being an *Alexandrian*) was educated in the ſchool of S. *Mark*, who firſt planted the Chriſtian faith here, as *Euſebius* ſhews; or, as others conjecture, among the *Eſſens*, who had a famous ſchool at *Alexandria*, and, if you believe *Baronius*, were convert Jews turned Chriſtians; which he thinks probable, both becauſe thoſe hiſtorians which ſpeak of the Jews, as *Joſephus*, *Strabo*, and the reſt, are wholly ſilent concerning this ſect; and chiefly becauſe all the ſects of the Jews, as *Phariſees*, *Sadduces*, *Herodians*, the ſcripture ſpeaks of as enemies to Chriſt, but we read of no oppoſition Chriſt met with from the *Eſſens*, nor doth Chriſt ever charge or denounce woes againſt them, as againſt the reſt: though I know others impute this to the fewneſs of that ſect in *Jeruſalem*, whileſt our Saviour lived, or elſe to the peaceable quietneſs, and calm of their ſpirit, not being given to contradiction, (as the *Sadduces* and *Phariſees* were, men of more hot and fiery ſpirits) it being part of their religion, as it is of too many of our times, to ſuffer every man in his; certain it is and confeſſed of all, that they were very diligent, and induſtrious in ſearching the ſcriptures of the *old Teſtament*, eſpecially the Prophets, and ſo might learn much of Chriſt; and here, it is likely, *Apollos* might get his large ſcripture-knowledge, which he ſo powerfully managed

ged to the conviction of the Jews concerning Chriſt; for verſe 28. it is ſaid, that *He mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, ſhewing by the ſcriptures, that Jeſus was Chriſt.*

2. Obſerve the *place*, where *Apollos* preached; it was not a Chriſtian conſtituted Church, but a Jewiſh Synagogue, *verſe 26. He began to ſpeak boldly in the Synagogue.* It was a generall, though corrupt, cuſtome amongſt the Jews to indulge libertie to learned men, though no prieſts, to teach in their Synagogues; as the Scribes and the Lawyers, which the Goſpel every where ſpeaks of: upon which cuſtome it was that S. *Paul*, though of the tribe of *Benjamin*, was ſo oft permitted to preach in their Synagogues, as we read throughout this book of the *Acts*: hence the teaching of the Scribes is oppoſed to that authority wherewith Chriſt preached. *Mat. 7. 29.* it is ſaid, Chriſt taught the people *as one having authority, and not as the Scribes*, who had none: So we finde *Apollos* here preaching in the Synagogue, *non ut habens autoritatem, ſed ſcientiam*, ſaith the learned *Eſtius*, as making uſe of, and taking advantage of that indulgence of the Jews to preach and ſpread the doctrine of Chriſt. *in locum, & Mar. 4. v. ult.*

3. Obſerve the *time* when he preached; it was when God for the more ſpeedy and effectuall propagating of the Goſpel poured out plentifully of the extraordinary Gifts of his Spirit, and it would be raſhneſs in any one to aſſert, that *Apollos* was not extraordinarily Gifted: and if ſo, this inſtance will nothing at all advantage thoſe pretenders who want ordinary Gifts.

4. Conſider that this *Apollos* was one of *Johns* diſciples; *ver. 25.* it is ſaid, *He knew only the baptiſme of John*, that is to ſay, the doctrine of *John* concerning Chriſt to come; and it may probably be thought the contrary cannot be proved, that he was authorized and commiſſionated by *John* to preach the Goſpel.

5. Obſerve what this *Apollos* was afterwards; an eminent, publick, and authorized preacher in the Church of *Corinth*; S. *Pauls* helper and ſucceſſor 1 *Cor. 3. 6. I have planted* (ſaith *Paul*) *and Apollo watered*, and therefore S. *Paul* calls him *his brother*, 1 *Cor. 16. 12.* and he is, *totidem verbis*, in expreſs terms called, *a miniſter*, 1 *Cor. 3. 5. Who is* Paul? *or who is* Apollos? *but miniſters by whom ye believed*; and ſo famous he was, that he hath the churches approbation of his Gifts, *verſe 27.* and when he came to *Corinth*, he was ſo eminent, that he proved the head of a ſect and faction (which is the higheſt ambition of their pretenders) 1 *Cor. 1. 12. One ſaith I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Chriſt*; and though this was after his preaching here at *Epheſus*, yet I (reading of no ordination he received afterwards) have

good reaſon to believe that he was now ordained.

6. Negative teſtimonies from Scripture in things circumſtantiall are but illogicall, and inartificiall arguments. God indeed hath in things fundamentall to faith and holineſs made a plentifull proviſion in ſcripture, which is able to *make a man wiſe to ſalvation*, and *perfect to every good work*. To aſſume any thing as a rule of life, or foundation of faith, more then that the ſcripture affords, is to impoſe upon our ſelves, and defame the ſcriptures; but ſilence of ſcripture in things circumſtantiall, eſpecially in particular inſtances, is not rationally argumentative. *Argumentum ab autoritate negante, ſed non ab autoritate negativè, valet in Theologicis*, ſaith a reverend man of our own: if ſcripture had ſaid plainly, that *Apollos* was not ordained, the inſtance had been of ſome force, but to argue, he was not ordained becauſe the ſcripture doth not ſay, *totidem verbis*, he was ſo, is to me a very irrationall and unſatisfactory argument. Nay, if we conſider the peremptory ſtrictneſs of ſcripture-commands, none ſhould take this office upon him, but he that is called as was *Aaron*, and that was done by the outward appointment of *Moſes*; and withall conſidering the Apoſtles care to leave *Titus* to ordain in every citie, and his ſtrict charge to *Timothy*, to *lay hands ſuddenly on no man*, to wit, without examination of his Gifts and abilities, and all this to prevent diſorderly, promiſcuous, daring intruſion into the miniſteriall office; conſidering withall the ſolemn ſeparating of *Barnabas* and *Paul* by prayer and laying on of hands, which calling and appointment S. *Paul* frequently aſſerts to uphold his authority amongſt them to whom he wrote, as to the *Romans* he tels them he was ἀφωρισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον, *ſeparated unto the Goſpel of Chriſt*; laying theſe things and many more which might be alleadged together, we, I think, finding *Apollos* here preaching (which may equally ſatisfie other inſtances brought out of ſcripture,) have good ground to believe he was ordained, though the ſcripture be ſilent in it, when it doth not aſſert the contrary.

2 Tim. 3. 15, 17.

Heb. 5. 4.

1 Tim. 5. 22. &

Acts 13. 12.

Rom. 1. 1.

7. If all this will not ſatisfie the objectors, let me adde this laſt by way of conceſſion; let thoſe, who lay this inſtance as a foundation for a *Babel* of confuſion in the church (for there can be no order in a rude and promiſcuous parity) I ſay, let thoſe pretenders demonſtrate themſelves to be *Apollo's*, men *eloquent, and mighty in the ſcriptures*, and for my part (though I think thoſe moſt fit to ſit in *Pauls* chair, who have been educated, and inſtructed at the feet of *Gamaliel*) I profeſs, I ſee no great reaſon, or evidence of ſcripture, why they may not be admitted to the miniſteriall office. But when either out of weakneſs they dare not, or out of pride

pride and faction they will not ſubmit themſelves to the judgement and appointment of thoſe whom ſcripture, precept, Apoſtolical practiſe, and uninterrupted cuſtom of the church hath impowred to ſet apart and authoriſe men for this office, and ſo enter in at the right door; but will audaciouſly climbe up ſome other way (excuſe the expreſſion from uncharitableneſs, 'tis our Saviours concerning the *Phariſees*, who were like intruders in theſe daies) they are but thieves and robbers, ſtealing away the hearts and affection of the people, yea, and the maintenance too from the right and duly-conſtituted miniſtrie.

Theſe conſiderations of the perſon I humbly and willingly ſubmit to your judgements, and ſhall come now to thoſe qualifications, which were the intended ſubject of my diſcourſe, when I firſt laid out my thoughts upon theſe words.

Firſt, λόγῳ, which may have a four-fold reference,

1. To his skill in Hiſtorie and Antiquitie; thus *Lorinus* underſtands the word: a fit qualification for an *Apollos*, a miniſter of the Goſpel, to be verſed eſpecially in *Eccleſiaſtical* and *Church-hiſtory*, where he may obſerve the various, and ſeverall providences of God protecting his church, the originall and growth of errors, arguments for the truth, and acquaint himſelf with thoſe ſupports and comforts which Chriſtians have had in ſuffering for it, all which are very uſefull for an *Apollos*.

2. To his knowledge in ſcripture; as if herein his eloquence conſiſted, not in a vain pomp, and proud oſtentation of words, but in a powerfull and quaint diſcoverie of that majeſticall elegancie and heavenly eloquence which is in ſcripture: no greater eloquence any where then in ſcripture; he that will ἐρευνᾶν (which is a *Metaphor*, you know, taken from diggers in mines) ſearch and dive into them, ſhall finde rich and precious mines of eloquence, golden *Allegories*, height of *Metaphors*, and all other tropes and figures of *Rhetorick* more fully and elegantly exemplified, then in any the moſt eloquent poet, or exacteſt orator; which the learned *Glaſius* in his *Philologia ſacra* hath admirably diſcovered.

True indeed, a curſorie and non-obſervant negligent reader cannot diſcover it; as a man, who onely looks upon, but never digges into a mine, will never finde the treaſure. S. *Auſtin* confeſſeth that, whiles he was a *Manichee*, he had low and mean thoughts of ſcripture, *viſa eſt mihi indigna, quam* Tullianæ *dignitati compararem*, ſaith he: he thought it not comparable to *Tullies* eloquence; but when he ſearch't farther into them, then he diſcovered that elegancie, which became the majeſtie of Scripture-myſteries, and men acted by the Spirit of God, as *Lib. 3. Confeſſ. cap. 5.*

you may ſee at large in that excellent piece of his *De doctrina Chriſtiana.*

Lib.4.c.6.

3. To the freedome and fluencie of his language; by which with a pleaſing violence he captivated the ears and hearts of his auditors: this is a great gift of God, and a very requiſite qualification of an *Apollos*, the want of which made *Moſes* decline the office, *O my Lord*, ſaith he, *I am not eloquent, I am ſlow of ſpeech, and of a ſlow tongue*, and could not be ſatisfied till God gave him the promiſe of more then ordinarie aſſiſtance, *v.12. I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou ſhalt ſay.* This is that ἄνοξις τῆς θύρας τῦ λόγυ, the *opening of the door of utterance*, which S. *Paul* exhorts the *Coloſſians* to pray for to God for him. A free and full abilitie of expreſſing the conceptions of the minde (according to the capacitie of the Auditors) is an excellent and deſirable miniſteriall gift, without which the greateſt parts oft prove unedifying and unprofitable.

Exod.4.10.

Coloſſ.4.3.

4. To his exquiſite skill in all arts and ſciences; and this the Greek word λογιότης ſignifies, as *Camerarius* notes, and this too is a requiſite qualification for an *Apollos*, a miniſter of the Goſpel. This was the eminencie of *Moſes*, that *he was learned in all the wiſdome of the Egyptians*, that is to ſay, the liberall arts and ſciences, which *Auſtin* compares to the *Egyptian* ſpoils transferred to the uſe and ſervice of the *Iſraelites*. This was the commendation of *Daniel*, that he was cunning in all knowledge and underſtanding, and skilfull in all wiſdome and learning. S. *Paul* was born at *Tarſus*, the Metropolis of *Cilicia*, more famous then *Athens* (if we credit *Strabo*) for the ſtudie of Philoſophy and the Greek tongue, and afterwards inſtructed by *Gamaliel* at Jeruſalem; ſo *Apollos* here is ἀνὴρ λόγιος. The greater wonder and pittie both, that ſuch knowledge, which was the real honour of thoſe, ſhould now be our diſcredit and reproach: we being fallen into thoſe times of which *Eſpencæus* complained, when *Græcè nôſſe ſuſpectum erat, Hebraicè propè Hæreticum*, or, if you will ſpeak in the more uncharitable language of our times, Antichriſtian; when 'tis the crie of too many, what *Feſtus* cried out againſt *Paul, that too much learning* inſtead of qualifying, and enabling any to be *Apollos*, miniſters of the Goſpel, *does* but *make us mad*: I wiſh the want of it did not make them more ſuch. But I ſhall not now undertake the vindication of learning, from thoſe uncharitable imputations, which hath lately been done by an ingenuous man amongſt our ſelves; but ſhall enter upon the ſecond qualification of *Apollos*, which I chiefly intended, δυνατὸς ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς, *mighty in the Scriptures*: which I ſhall ſpeak of; Firſt, *Doctrinally*, in two particulars,

Acts 7.22.

Dan.1.4.

Acts 26.24.

1. I

1. I ſhall ſhew the excellencie of Scripture-knowledge in it ſelf.

2. The uſefulneſs of it as to *Apollos*, a Miniſter of the Goſpel.

Secondly, *Practically* in a few words of Application.

Firſt the excellencie of Scripture-knowledge in it ſelf appears in theſe conſiderations,

1. The excellencie of things revealed in ſcripture, ſo ſublime and ſpirituall, that the light of nature, and the higheſt improvement of reaſon, could never have diſcovered without divine revelation, as the ſecrets of *Gods electing love, reconciliation by Chriſt, juſtification by faith, adoption, the covenant of grace:* theſe are ſecrets which the eye of reaſon could never prie into; theſe were myſteries hidden from ages and generations, but now manifeſted by the Goſpel. To theſe adde the glorious myſterie of the *bleſſed Trinity*, which is wholly indemonſtrable by naturall reaſon; indeed, firſt ſuppoſing ſcripture-revelation, there may poſſibly be ſome reſemblances of it found in the creation, as the *eſſe, poſſe*, and *operari* of every creature, or thoſe three common notions of Being, *Oneneſs, Truth, Goodneſs*, and many more which the ſchooles inſiſt on; and there may be ſome argument to evince my faith not to be againſt reaſon (though I have the greateſt reaſon in the world to believe it, becauſe God ſaies it) as that God ſhould *infinitly communicate himſelf*, or from the *perfection* of the *number three*, and the *great account* the *Heathens* had of it; which arguments *Eſtius* urges, who yet confeſſeth this myſterie, abſtracted from divine revelation, wholly indemonſtrable by any light of reaſon: this myſterie ſcripture diſcovers, *There are three, who bare record in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; and theſe three are one.* 1 John 5.7. To inſtance but in one, which indeed is the ſumme and ſubſtance of all divine revelation, the *myſterie* of Chriſt, which is above the reach, and beyond the diſcerning of moſt prying and improved reaſon: I eaſily believe the Heathens (the wiſeſt of them at leaſt) might have ſome knowledge of the fall of man, from the *rebellion of paſsion* againſt *reaſon*, from the *ſtrange proneneſs* which they experienced *to vices, quæ ſine exemplo diſcuntur*, ſaith *Seneca*, not inclined to them by any acquired habit, nor led by any bad examples, nay, even to thoſe vices which carrie a contradiction in them to naturall light; adde to them the *difficulty* of *acquiring habits*, and *exerciſing* the *acts* of *virtue* (which would be eaſie if naturall): theſe were evident ſignes and effects of ſome ſin, which prepoſſeſſed and inhabited our nature, to which purpoſe that of *Auſtin* is excellent, *continentia tam concupiſcentiæ teſtis eſt, quàm hoſtis, Continence is both the* Lib. 3. quæſt. cap. 30.

enemy, and evidence of concupiſcence: for virtue could not be heard, if it were not oppoſed by the ſtrength of naturall inclinations to ſin. Theſe, I ſay, and many other ſad effects of mans Apoſtacie, which might be named, are evidences to reaſon, that man is not now as he came out of the hands of God, but ſomewhat degenerate from his originall rectitude; but Gods dealing with man in a Covenant-way, and by his infinite wiſdome ordering and diſpoſing mans fall and Apoſtacie, to the accompliſhing ſo great a myſterie as the ſending of Chriſt into the world, to reſtore and recover man into a ſtate in ſome reſpects better then that of innocencie, is a depth naturall reaſon could never fathom. God inhabiting humane nature, the word made fleſh, and ſo undertaking for the recoverie of loſt man, Chriſt in his three-fold office, as Prophet, Prieſt, and King, to diſpel the darkneſs, expiate the guilt, and conquer the rebellion of corrupted nature, healing by Chriſts ſtripes, life by his death, are paradoxes to reaſon.

Per mortem alterius ſtultum eſt ſperare ſalutem.

The candle of the Lord, as the ſoul of man is called, may diſcover ſomething (though but darkly) of God, but Scripture onely is the ſtar to lead us unto Chriſt. It was a juſt cenſure, which *Auguſtin* paſſeth upon *Tullies* works, that he could not finde the name of Chriſt in them. The Scriptures are the ſwadling-clothes in which Chriſt was wrapped. Our reaſon is of too low a ſtature, and therefore as *Zacheus* did upon the Sycamore, we muſt climbe the tree of life, the Scripture, if we would get a ſight of Jeſus.

Naturall reaſon may diſcover the back-parts of God in the creature, but if ſhe pretends or preſumes to diſcover the Sun of righteouſneſs, ſhe betraies her weakneſs and degeneracie; it is one end of Scripture-revelation, to ſupply the ſhortneſs and defect of naturall reaſon. Nay, the glorious Angels, the moſt quick-ſighted of the whole creation, could not have diſcovered theſe Goſpel-myſteries, *Which things*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *the Angels deſire to look into*; παρακύψαι, to *ſtoop*, to *peep*, to *prie into*, as things vailed and hidden, alluding to the Cherubims, which were made with their eyes looking down towards the mercie-ſeat; the word ſignifies a *diligent*, *ſollicitous*, and *through ſearch*: *Tanta Evangelii, & myſterii ſalutis majeſtas eſt atque jucunditas*, ſaith *Glaſsius*, either raviſhed with the pleaſantneſs, or confounded and blinded with the Majeſtie of theſe myſteries. They deſire to prie into them, and ſo they might have done, and been never the wiſer, had not God revealed them by Scripture. What the Apoſtle ſpeaks of that one myſterie of *incorporating* Jew and Gentile into one bodie by Chriſt, we may

1 Pet. 1. 12.

Epheſ. 3. 10.

ſay

ſay of theſe Goſpel-myſteries, that God revealed to the intent, that unto principalities, and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wiſdome of God; without which revelation, the Angels had been ſtrangers to theſe myſteries to this very day.

2. The excellencie of the revelation it ſelf, or manner of revealing them, which appears upon a three-fold account.

1. The fulneſs and ſufficiencie of it, both as to doctrine and practice, faith and maners, both to make a man of God *wiſe unto ſalvation, and perfect to every good work.* 2Tim.3.15, 17.

1. Scripture contains a full revelation of all foundations of faith, or things neceſſarie to be believed to ſalvation, either expreſly, or by convincing, evident, and undeniable conſequence, and needs not to be eeked out with unwritten traditions, or pretended enthuſiaſmes and revelations. Tradition, which brings down and conveys Scripture-truths through the ſucceſſive ages of the Church to us, we cannot without ingratitude but acknowledge as an eminent inſtance, and teſtimonie of Gods providence, and none of the leaſt arguments for the authoritie, and Divinitie of Scripture; and in this ſence the Church is στύλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας, as the pillar holds forth the Kings proclamation, but contributes no authoritie to it. And in this ſence too, S. *Auguſtin's non credidiſſem Scripturæ niſi Eccleſiæ autoritas commoveret*, may go for good and currant Divinitie: we could not have believed the Scripture, becauſe we could not have had it, if providence had not handed it to us by the Church. So revelation of Scripture-myſteries by the Spirit of God we acknowledge as the accompliſhment of a great Goſpel-promiſe of the Spirit *leading us into all truth*: which therefore the Apoſtle *Paul* praies for for the *Epheſians*, that God would give unto them πνεῦμα ἀποκαλύψεως, *the Spirit of revelation*, the knowledge of Chriſt: but traditions or revelations, as additionall or ſupplementall to Scripture, we reject as detracting from the wiſdome of God, and the perfection of revealed truth. *Non eſt ſcriptum, timeat væ illud adjicientibus*, to wit, that wo, *if any ſhall adde unto theſe words, God ſhall adde unto him the plagues which are written in this book*; and the Apoſtle paſſeth an *Anathema* upon whoever ſhould (though an Angel from heaven) *preach any other Goſpel then he had preached.* *Notanter dicit* præter *non* contra; not onely what is *againſt*, but what is *more* then Scripture-revelation is to be rejected; there is enough revealed to bring us unto ſalvation, and what would you have more? *Theſe things are written*, ſaith S. *John*, *that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through his name*; and *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think* Joh.16.13. Epheſ. 1.17. *Tertul.* Revel.22.18 Gal.1.6. Joh.20.31. Joh.5.39.

think to have eternall life: and our Saviour doth not blame them for thinking ſo. And if Scripture be not ſufficient, we may ſay as the diſciples in another caſe, *ad quid perditio hæc,* to what purpoſe was it written? *To the law and to the teſtimonie,* ſaith *Iſaiah.* When the rich glutton in hell deſired one ſhould be ſent from the dead to his brethren; *Abraham* ſends them to *Moſes* and the Prophets, *let them hear them*; let them but believe what is in *Moſes* and the Prophets, and they need not fear coming into this place of torment.

Matth. 26.8. Eſay. 8.20. Luke 16.29.

2. Scripture is a full and perfect rule of holineſs, able to make the man of God throughly furniſhed to every good work. Therefore our Saviour, when the Lawyer came and tempted him with that queſtion, *What ſhall I do to inherit eternall life?* bids him have recourſe to the Scriptures, *What is written in the law? how readeſt thou?* This is the onely perfect, and unerring rule of true righteouſneſs. Thoſe three words of the Apoſtle, σωφρόνως, δικαίως, εὐσεβῶς, ſpeak the whole dutie of a Chriſtian in all his capacities, and relations to God, himſelf, and his neighbour: and this the Goſpel teacheth and engageth us to do. So perfect a rule it is, that the moſt ſpecious obſervances, the moſt glorious performances, the moſt exact worſhip is no way acceptable unto God, if not commanded in, and directed by the Word. They may have λόγον σοφίας ἐν ἐθελοθρησκείᾳ, they may have a ſhew of wiſdome in *Will-worſhip*, to the pleaſing of men, not to the honour of God. God gave *Moſes* a pattern for the making of the Tabernacle, and *David* for the Temple, and all things were to be ordered and regulated according to this pattern. God hath ſet us a perfect rule of worſhip in his word, and no ſervice pleaſeth him but what is according to this rule: as our Saviour told the woman of *Samaria*, concerning the *Samaritan* worſhip, at mount *Garazim*, and *Jewiſh* worſhip at *Jeruſalem*, that the *Samaritanes* worſhipped they knew not what, the *Jews* knew what they worſhipped, for ſalvation was of the *Jews*; Why ſo? becauſe the *Jews* had Gods ſpeciall direction, and appointment of Gods word for their ſervice, which the *Samaritanes* had not.

Titus 2.11, 12. Coloſſ. 2.23. Exod. 25.9. Heb. 8.5.

We acknowledge the Churches power to determine decent obſervances, and conſtitutions for publick order in the ſervice of God. The Apoſtles πάντα εὐσχημόνως will ſufficiently warrant this. The Church is a cypher, ſtands for nothing, if it hath not power here, and he, who wilfully ſleights theſe, will be found guiltie of contempt and diſorder: but the impoſition of traditional obſervances in ſo needleſs a number, as may ſeem to reduce us under the Jewiſh yoke, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear;

1 Cor. 14.40. Acts 15.10.

or

or as equally obligatorie to conſcience as divine commands; or as the immediate worſhip of God; or as duties eſſentially neceſſarie in order to ſalvation, we juſtly abhor as the Tyrannie of *Rome*, as the infringement of Chriſtian libertie, as a violation and voiding the commandment of God, as our Saviour told the Phariſees, that they *made the commandment of God of none effect*, that is, ſleighted & diſregarded by their traditions. Mat. 15.6. All our holineſs, all our worſhip muſt be regulated by Gods will, not our own: *Non ex arbitrio Deo ſerviendum, ſed ex imperio*; not according to our own fancie, but Gods command and preſcription. It may ſeem ſomewhat a ſtrange expreſſion at firſt, *Iſrael hath forgotten his maker, and builded Temples*; Hoſea 8.14. one would rather think this was a reverencing of God: this is the account of it, God had appointed one Temple, and they multiply and build many, contrarie to Gods direction and inſtitution. I ſay of all humane invented will-worſhip of God, as *Tertullian* of the Heathen-worſhip, *Ex religione ſuperſtitio compingitur, & eo irreligioſior quantò Ethnicus paratior.* Men in this are no better then laborioufly ſuperſtitious, taking pains to be irreligious. And the judicious *Hooker* determines, that in Gods ſervice to do that which we are not, is a greater fault, then not to do that which we are commanded. Amongſt other reaſons he gives this to our purpoſe, in that we ſeem to charge the law of God with hardneſs onely; in that with fooliſhneſs and inſufficiencie; which God gave us as a perfect rule of his worſhip and ſervice. I ſhall conclude this point with that of S. *Paul*, *As many as walk according to this rule, peace ſhall be on them, and mercie, and upon the Iſrael of God.* Gal. 6.16.

2. The perſpicuitie and plainneſs of this revelation.

It is the deſign and plot of *Rome* to faſten an imputation of obſcuritie upon the written Word, that hereby ſhe may with more plauſible ſhew exalt *Peters* pretended ſucceſſour into the infallible chair, as an unerring interpreter, and alſo diſcourage and diſhearten the people from reading them. As the ſpies reported the land of *Canaan* to be impregnable, and ſo diſheartned the *Iſraelites*. Hence the Papiſts crie out of Scripture, that it is unintelligible, and obſcure to vulgar and common capacities, and thus they defame, and raiſe a falſe report of the written Word, and make the difficultie of it a pretence for their neglect, and cloak for their ignorance.

The Scripture was made to be a Chriſtians guide, and rule of life (as I ſaid before): a blinde guide, a dark and obſcure rule is a contradiction. *Thy word is a light to my feet, and a lanthorn to my paths*, ſaith *David*; Pſ. 119.105. and the Apoſtle *Peter* bids us look to the Scripture, as *a light which ſhineth in a dark place*: 2 Pet. 1.19. the ſame Apoſtle indeed obſerved in S. *Pauls* Epiſtles δυσνόητά τινα, *ſome things hard to* 2 Pet. 3.16.

be underſtood; this relates to the ſublimitie and myſteriousneſs of things revealed, not to the obſcuritie of the revelation.

There is a depth of myſterie in Scripture, cloathed with a plain and familiar expreſſion, *Thy teſtimonies are wonderfull*, ſaith *David*. There is the myſterie of Scripture yet follows, *The entrance of thy words giveth light, it giveth underſtanding to the ſimple*. Here are myſteries to exerciſe the acuteſt wits, depths for the profoundeſt judgements to fathom, and yet ſo plain and obvious, that the meaneſt and plaineſt, uſing the means, as prayer, diligent ſearch, and the reſt, may profit by. Here is meat for ſtrong and grown Chriſtians, and here is milk for babes too. In a word, God hath ſo intermingled, and interwoven Scripture-Revelations with ſome difficulties, ſome facilities; that plainneſs breeds not contempt, nor difficultie neglect and diſheartnings, that by the plainneſs of them he might teach us knowledge, and by the difficulties learn us humilitie.

Pſal.119. 129. *Ibid.*v.130.

3. The certaintie and infallibilitie of Scripture-Revelation, as being written by the guidance and dictate of an infallible Spirit. *All Scripture is given by divine inſpiration: no Scripture is* ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως, *of private interpretation*, ſo our tranſlation, or ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως, or ἐπιλυσίας, *of any private ſpirit*, which reading I finde pleaſeth *Beza* beſt, as agreeing with what is ſaid in the next *verſe*, that the pen-men of Scripture were, ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι. *For the prophecie came not of old time by the will of man, but holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt*: and therefore Scripture is a certain and infallible rule of faith and holineſs.

2 Tim.3.16. 2 Pet.1.20. *Ibid.*verſ 21.

This was one end of Scripture, That we might have an infallible rule of life, and judge of ſaving truth; which, had it been brought unto us onely by the aery conveyance of Tradition, uncertain revelation, might ſoon have been either forgotten, or corrupted. If we leave the Scripture once, we are left at miſerable uncertainties, and lie open to all deceits and deluſions. If we reſt upon Enthuſiaſticall revelations, Satan can transform himſelf into an *Angel of light*, and delude us: our faith and obedience will be alwaies at uncertainties. The revelations of thoſe (who pretend to them) be alwaies various, ſometimes contrarie, and commonly pretended to, to ſerve new intereſts and deſigns. The Spirit is every mans pretence, and therefore we muſt have ſome way to examine, and judge of the truth or falſeneſs and error of every mans ſpirit: and this can be no other way, but by the infallible *Canon* of the Scripture. We never finde S. *Paul* alleadging any of thoſe ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα, thoſe revelations which he had when he was *caught up into the third heaven*, but he hath recourſe to the Scripture for the

1 Cor.11.13

2 Cor. 12.4.

the vindication of the Doctrine he delivered; as you may ſee in his Apologie before *Agrippa*, *I continue*, ſaith he, *to this day ſaying no other things, then what Moſes and the Prophets did ſay ſhould come.* Acts 26.22. And the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaking of the voice from heaven (though that was a true one, yet) adds, we have βεβαιότερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον, *a ſurer word of propheſie*; (to wit, the Scriptures, the ſame with προφητεία γραφῆς, *verſe* 20.) *whereunto ye do well that ye take heed.* 2 Pet.1.18, 19. A voice from heaven may ſooner deceive us, then the written Word of God: if we reſt upon Traditions; theſe are oft erronious (as *Rome* can witneſs) at beſt fallible and uncertain.

A man can ſcarce ever know when he hath believed and practiſed rightly, or enough: Traditions being variable, and oft in divers ſucceſſions, one contrarie to another, in the guidances, and direction of our Paſtors and Teachers. Nor can we certainly, or ſafely reſolve our belief into them, for we are bid to trie theſe Spirits, *whether they be of God.* 1 John 4.1. They may either out of ignorance, or malice miſlead you: *Scripture Canon* is the onely infallible guide, and God may as ſoon deceive you, as Scripture can.

3. The excellent ends and fruits of this revelation and the knowledge of it: that is, not onely for diſcourſe (though I could heartily wiſh it were made more uſe of this way): not onely to exerciſe a ſubtile wit (though there be Scripture-myſteries will do this too): not onely to ripen a laſcivient fancie; which are the greateſt ends of all other knowledge; but the ends of Scripture-knowledge are more heavenly and ſpiritual. The Apoſtle hath enumerated them to our hands, *it is profitable* πρὸς διδασκαλίαν *for doctrine*, if thou beeſt ignorant; πρὸς ἔλεγχον *for reproof*, if thou beeſt erring and miſled; πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν *for correction*, if thou beeſt ſinning; πρὸς παιδείαν *for inſtruction* in righteouſneſs, to lead the to, and direct thee in thy dutie. 2 Tim.3.16.

Conſider the excellencie of it in theſe reſpects above all other knowledge.

1. It is a *confirming* knowledge, the foundation and principle of conſtancie and ſettledneſs in Religion. The chief cauſe of the light Scepticiſme, and wavering unſettledneſs of our times, is the want of a ſound Scripture-knowledge of the Truth, with which if mens ſpirits were well ballaſſed, they would not ſo ſoon be *toſſed about* and *carried away with every wind of doctrine.* The Apoſtle, ſpeaking of ſuch, gives this account of it: that *they were children in underſtanding.* Ephes.4.14. Obſerve who they are the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, who are *led captive* by thoſe *ſeducers, who creep into houſes*: they are *ſillie women.* verſe 7. And why they? the reaſon is given; *becauſe they*

are ever learning, and can never come to the knowledge of the truth. No man can ſimply deſire to be deceived. Error, as error, hath no ſutableneſs, or adequation to mans underſtanding; but many are deluded by error under the vizard of truth; *Jacob* was deceived with blear-eyed *Leah* inſtead of fair *Rachel.*

While men are in the dark, not enlightned by a clear Scripture-knowledge, they oft court error for truth. This never more eaſie then in theſe daies; when that, which will moſt ſecure us from Apoſtatizing from acknowledged and received truth, is a ſound Scripture-knowledge: which therefore the Apoſtle prays God for the *Coloſſians* and others, that they might have the *full aſſurance of underſtanding to the acknowledgement of the myſterie of Chriſt*, and he gives the reaſon, *This ſpeak I leſt any man ſhould beguile you with entiſing words.*

Coloſſ. 2. 2.

Verſe 4.

2. It is a *comforting, ſupporting* knowledge. So *David* found it, *Pſal.* 19. 8. *The ſtatutes of the Lord are pure, rejoycing the heart*; and *verſe* 10, *ſweeter they are then the honey, and the honey-comb.* The *Wiſe-man* (and he ſpake it experimentally; as having more wiſdome then all that were before him in *Jeruſalem*) found the upſhot of all his knowledge to be nothing but *vexation of ſpirit*, Eccleſ. 1. 16. paſſing this deliberate judgement and ſentence upon it, *verſe* 18. that *in much wiſdome is much grief, and he that increaſeth knowledge, increaſeth ſorrow.* But the comfort of Chriſtians was one end of Scripture, which was written, *That we through patience, and comfort of the Scripture, might have hope.* Here an obſervant Reader may diſcover many glorious promiſes, which are rich treaſures of comfort, full breaſts of conſolation, from which the pious Chriſtian may ſuck much ſupporting and chearing ſweetneſs. Here we *may ſuck and be ſatisfied with the breaſts of conſolation*, as the Prophet expreſſeth it, *Iſaiah* 66. 11. The promiſe is as full of comfort as a dugge is full of milk; as crying children are quietted with the dugge, ſo perplexed conſciences are quieted and eaſed by the promiſes; this all other knowledge in the world cannot help you too. What refuges hath *Seneca*, the wiſeſt of *Stoicks*, found for doubting and troubled mindes? and yet all ended in mere diſquietneſs. Not *Athens* muſt teach this leſſon, but *Jeruſalem*; not Reaſon, but Revelation; not Nature, but Scripture. I have read of a woman, who was much diſquieted in conſcience, even to deſpair, and endeavouring to prove her own executioner, was comforted by that promiſe, *Iſaiah* 57. 15. *Thus ſaith the high and the loftie one which inhabiteth eternitie, whoſe name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place: with him alſo that is of an humble and contrite ſpirit, to revive the hearts of the contrite ones:*

Rom. 15. 4.

and

and of another who being readie to die, *Lord*, ſaith he, *I challenge thy promiſe, by which thou art engaged to give reſt to thoſe who are weary, and heavy laden*; and ſo was comforted.

3. It is a *Transforming* knowledge; which no other knowledge is. We read, *Rom.*1.21. of the Heathen, who, *when they knew God, glorified him not as God*: and the *Pſalmiſt*, having ſpoken of the knowledge of God in his creatures, ſubjoyns this as the perfection of the word of God, *Pſal.* 19.7. that it converteth the ſoul, *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul.* In a word, natural knowledge is onely ſufficient to make men without excuſe, but Scripture-knowledge to make us *wiſe unto ſalvation.* 2 Tim.3.15.

Secondly, The uſefulneſs and neceſſitie of it, as to an *Apollos*, is ſtill in Scripture juſtly accounted the cognizance, and commendation of of an able Miniſter. It was *Ezras* commendation that he was *a readie Scribe in the Law of Moſes*: and *Timothies*, that *from a child he had known the holy Scriptures*, which *Paul* notes as the badge of a good Miniſter: *Thou* (ſaith he to *Timothy*) *ſhalt be a good Miniſter, nouriſhed up in the words of faith and of good doctrine.* 2 Tim.3.15. 1 Tim.4.6.

This knowledge is neceſſarie,

1. *That he may truely and ſavingly make known, and diſcover Jeſus Chriſt.* This is the great dutie of Miniſters, which was the end for which S. *Paul* deſired the *door of utterance*, Coloſ. 4.3. λαλῆσαι τὸ μυςήριον τοῦ Χριςοῦ, *to ſpeak the myſterie of Chriſt*: and therefore he *deſired to know nothing*, among the *Corinthians, but Jeſus Chriſt and him crucified.* Chriſt, he is the ſumme of Law and Goſpel; the ſubſtance, and as it were Epitome of the written Word. Every thing in Scripture relates ſome way or other to Chriſt: the Types ſhadowed him, the Prophets foretold him, the Sacraments ſignifie him and ſeal him. The Law is a *School-maſter to lead us unto Chriſt*; the Goſpel offers him, and conveys him, our faith receives him, our love imbraces him, our hope expects him, our obedience imitates and honours him; the promiſes are grounded upon him, by the Goſpel-priviledges purchaſed by him. Thus Chriſt is the Center, wherein all theſe lines of revealed truth meet, and when a Miniſter hath diſcovered Chriſt, he hath done all; and this he cannot do without the Scriptures, *Search the Scriptures, for they teſtifie of me*, ſaith Chriſt, *John* 5.3. We are *Embaſſadors for Chriſt*; and the Scriptures are our Credential letters, which contain all the terms of *reconciliation* and *peace*, upon which we muſt treat with rebellious ſinners, and act for the intereſt of our great Lord and Maſter. 1 Cor.2.2. Gal.3.24. 2 Cor.5.20.

2. *That he may preach according to the analogie of faith*: which is the Apoſtles exhortation, *Rom.* 12. 6. let him that propheſieth *propheſie according to the analogie of faith*: κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως, according to the *ſcope, conſent, and harmonie of Scripture*. Scripture is its own beſt interpreter: one Scripture gives light to another: as it was an ordinance of old for the Prieſt in the Temple *to light one lamp by another*; and the Jews were wont, when they read *Moſes*, to read ſo much of the Prophets, as was moſt anſwerable to that part of the Law. To obſerve the conſent of Scripture is an excellent means of underſtanding Chriſt. The Apoſtles themſelves, though acted by the ſame infallible Spirit, yet alwaies quote Scripture: not ſo much to confirm their doctrine, as to demonſtrate the harmonie of revealed truth, and ſo to explain obſcurer Scripture by plainer; as S. *Peter* having alleadged that place, *Pſal.* 16. 10. *Thou ſhalt not leave my ſoul in hell*, &c. which might ſeem obſcure, he preſently adds other Scriptures to prove that this could not be underſtood of *David*, but of Chriſt; as you may ſee *Acts* 2. *verſe* 30.

Acts 2. *from* v. 25. *to* 32.

A *Timothy* muſt have ὑποτύπωσιν τῶν ὑγιαινόντων λόγων, *a form of ſound words*; not onely ſome looſe ſcattered confuſed notions of Truth, but a methodical orderly Syſteme of Scripture-truth, that hereby diſcovering the dependance of one upon another, he may the more fully underſtand all.

2 Tim. 1. 13.

This notion of the Apoſtles ὀρθοτομεῖν, *rightly to divide the word of truth*, to wit, according to Scripture-analogie and conſent, cannot be done without a laborious ſtudie, and perfect knowledge of the Scripture.

2 Tim. 2. 15.

3. *That he may convince gainſayers*: which is a dutie the Apoſtle requires of every Miniſter, τοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας ἐλέγχειν.

Two ſorts of Gainſayers a Miniſter is to grapple with,

1. Gainſayers in *Opinion*.
2. Gainſayers in *Practiſe*.

By Scripture-knowledge he may be able to convince both theſe.

1. Gainſayers in *Opinion*, whoſe errours contradict the truth of Scripture. And if ever it were neceſſarie to be armed againſt ſuch, moſt certainly in our daies; wherein it is the height of many mens ambition, and a great attainment to be a Gainſayer to received and acknowledged truth. None ſo ſucceſsfull conviction of ſuch, as by *Scripture-argument*; if you alleadge and urge *Reaſon*, ſome of our Gainſayers are uncapable of it, and will caſt it of as *Carnal*; if *Learning*, *too much* (ſay they) *makes you mad*: but, as *David* ſaid of *Goliah's* ſword, *there is none like that*, no ſword fitter to fight with

1 Sam. 21 9.

theſe

theſe oppoſers then the ſword of the Spirit, the word of God, none like this; with this our Saviour routed Satan, the Prince of darkneſs, the father and patron of errour, in three onſets; *Scriptum eſt*, &c. as thus afterwards our Saviour dealt with Satans complices and abettors, as the *Sadduces*, who denied the reſurrection. *Have ye not read* (he confutes them from *Exod.* 3. 6.) *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead but of the living.* So the *Phariſees* errour, concerning the lawfulneſs of divorce, Chriſt confutes from *Geneſ.* 1. and 2. *Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female, and they twain ſhall be one fleſh?* and ſo forth. The Apoſtles afterwards trod in their Maſters ſteps, and wrote after his Copie. *Stephen* confutes the Jews by epitomizing the hiſtorie of the Old Teſtament: S. *Paul* confutes the Idolatrie of the *Athenians*, from *Pſal.* 50. 8. *Who giveth us life, and breath, and all things*, as you may ſee. And this was one effect of *Apollos* his accuratneſs in the Scripture, that διακατήλεγχετο, he *convinced* the contradicting, and gainſaying Jews, *that Jeſus was Chriſt*. So true is that of *Tertullian*, that Hereticks are *lucifugæ Scripturarum*, they hate the light of the Scriptures, leſt their errours ſhould be detected and reproved. The Papiſts denie the people the uſe of Scripture upon this pretence, leſt it ſhould *breed errours*: the truth is, leſt it ſhould *diſcover*, and *confute* them. He that doth truth, comes to the light, but errour hates it. Thus the *Manichees* errour, of *God being the cauſe of ſin*, flees the light of thoſe Scriptures, *Thou art not a God that haſt pleaſure in wickedneſs*; and, *A God of purer eyes then to behold ſin*; and *He that doth ſin is of his father the devil.* So the *Pelagian* errour of *Free-will*, and *the Power of corrupted nature*, flees the light of thoſe Scriptures, *Without me you can do nothing*, ſaith Chriſt; and, *God worketh both to will and to do of his good pleaſure.* The *Antinomian* doctrine cannot bear the light of thoſe Scriptures, *I came not to deſtroy the Law, but to fulfill it*; and, *Do we make void the Law by faith? God forbid: nay, we eſtabliſh the Law.* An induction of particulars would be too tedious; but this in general, that opinion which the Scripture confutes not, either is no errour at all, or, be ſure, of no dangerous conſequence in point of ſalvation.

Mat. 4. 7.
Mat. 22. 31, 32.
Mat. 19 4. 5, 6.
Acts 7.
Acts 17. 25.
Acts 18. 29.
De reſur. car.
Pſal. 5. 4. Habak. 1. 13.
1 John 3. 8.
John 15. 5. Phil. 2. 13.
Mat. 5. 17. Rom. 3. 31.

2. Gainſayers in *practiſe*, who contradict the purity of the Goſpel by *holding the truth in unrighteouſneſs* and turning Goſpel-grace into *wantoneſs*; and theſe are more frequent then the former. Many profeſs Goſpel-truth, yet do not embrace Goſpel-holineſs: theſe are to be convinced by Scripture, as our Saviour did the Phariſees of hypocriſie from the Prophet *Eſay*, *This people draweth*

Mat. 15. 7.
Eſay 29. 13.

Epheſ. 5. 13. *eth near unto me with their mouth and their lip, but their heart is far from me. All things, which are reproved, are made manifeſt by the light*; that is to ſay, by the light of the Scriptures. There is a ſearching power in the word of God, which is *quick*, and *powerfull*, and *ſharper then any two-edged ſword*, and *is a diſcerner of the thoughts* Hebr. 4. 12. and *intents of the heart*; and if it be powerfully and wiſely managed, how may a *Moſes* make the heart of a *Pharaoh* ſometimes *relent*? a *Nathan* make a *David weepe*? a *Paul* put a *Felix* into a *fit of trembling*? and a *Peter* make the Jews *pricked at the heart*? and a *John Baptiſt* convince a *Herod* of his unlawfull and wicked enjoyment of his beloved *Herodias*? How doth the word of God oft drive men from thoſe forts, and ſuccours and deluſions which they had framed to deceive themſelves, and encourage themſelves in the ways of ſin? as, *others ſin as well as I*: what ſaith Scripture to this? Exod. 23. 2. *Follow not a multitude to commit iniquity*; and, Prov. 11. 21. *Though hand joyn in hand, the wicked ſhall not be unpuniſhed. I may deferre my repentance from youth to old age*, ſaith another: See what Scripture Eccleſ. 12. 1. ſaith to this, *Remember thy Creatour in the daies of thy youth*, &c. and, Hebr. 3. 15. *To day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. This is but* Rom. 6. 23. *a peccadillo*, ſaith another: Scripture ſaith, *The ways of ſin is death.* Such flatteries and deceits the deceitfull heart of man is apt to gull it ſelf with. The power of the word is to ſuch as the voice of God was to *Adam, Where art thou?* and then he could lie hid no longer: it convinceth and diſcovers them. This is the effect of preaching the word, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *If all propheſie*, (to wit, of the *nature* of *ſin*, *Gods wrath againſt it*, and the like, as *Pareus* gloſſes) *if there come in one that believeth not, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all, and the ſecrets of his heart are* Mr. *Dod.* *made manifeſt.* When a reverend Divine amongſt our ſelves, had by a powerfull Sermon convinced a licentious wretch, who heard him, he fretting and very angry (as wicked men cõmonly are at a convincing Miniſter) came to him and charged him with preaching that Sermon againſt him out of malice and envy; he returned him this anſwer, *If this Sermon had been preached in the dark, when I could not have ſeen my Auditors, this very word of God would have found thee out, and convinced thee of thy ſins.* In a word, *Rectum & verum eſt menſura ſui & obliqui*: therefore Scripture containing all fundamental doctrines of faith, and eſſential duties of holineſs neceſſary to ſalvation, muſt conſequently be ſufficient to confute, and reprove all contrary ſin and errour.

Mal. 2. 7. 4. *That he may inſtruct the people and inform them of their whole duty.* Here they muſt expect, and require their knowledge; for, *The Prieſts lips ſhall preſerve knowledge, and the people ſhall require it at his*

his mouth. Unless their doctrine distill as the dew, the field of the Lord, the Church, must needs be barren in holiness and fruitless in knowledge. This is the last vse the Apostle saith the Scripture is profitable for, πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ: *for instruction in righteousnesse.* 2 Tim. 3. 18.

True indeed (may the people say) it is fit and necessary, that *Apollos's,* Ministers, should be mighty in the Scriptures: but, we hope, we may be excused from searching the Scriptures, it is not our duty, we are to expect it from our teachers. *Objection.*

Indeed this is *Rome's* language. If you were at *Rome,* you might be exempted; that Church will gratifie you in this and thank you too: they account it no better to suffer lay-men to read the Bible, then *sanctum canibus, margaritas ante porcos projicere,* (it is the expression of *Hosius*) *to cast pearles before swine or that which is holy to dogs:* you are little beholding to them for this. But, believe it, though Antichrist will exempt you from reading the Scripture, Christ will not, who enjoynes it, as a duty upon all to *search the Scriptures:* and observe the argument he useth to enforce this duty; *for in them ye think to have eternal life.* If then you expect any interest in that happiness, you are concerned, and engaged in this duty of Scripture-search; which is both commanded and cõmended in Scripture. *Let the word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdome,* saith *S. Paul*: and it was the commendation of the *Bereans,* that they *searched the Scriptures daily,* whether the things that *Paul* and *Silas* preached were true or no. *Answer.* Joh. 5. 39. Colos. 3. 16. Acts. 17. 11.

The Church of *Rome* accuse, and charge this promiscuous searching of the Scripture as the cause of Heresy, pride, and faction. I deny not, Scripture misunderstood is sometimes abused to promote these ends: but this is not the natural, and proper effect of reading the Scripture, the ignorance of which, if we believe our Saviour, is the cause of Heresy, and error. *Ye erre,* saith Christ to the Sadduces, *not knowing the Scriptures:* and indeed if wee be robbed of the Compass of Scripture, we must needs split upon the rock of errour. In a word then, it is the Tyrannie of *Rome* to withhold it, and it will be your sin to neglect it. Matt. 22. 29.

Application.

1. *This condemns, and corrects that general neglect and undervaluing of Scripture:* which (now *Atheisme* is justly feared to be growing upon us) prevailes in the world, men preferring every thing else before this. The *Papist* exalts his *unwritten Tradition* above the *written Word. Pari pietatis affectu suscipimus & veneramur,* may seem a modest determination of the *Tridentine* convention, and much

leſs then their practiſe ſpeaks. The *Enthuſiaſt* magnifies his *pretended revelation*, and Scripture to him is but a *dead letter*, and the ſearcher of it but *literalis*, and *vocalis* too. But let us return home, and ſee whither we can plead not guilty: where are our *Nepotians*, who by diligent peruſal of the Scripture, make their ſouls *Bibliothecam Chriſti*, as *Hierom* ſaith of him? Where ſhall we finde an *Alphonſus*, who is reported to have read the Bible ten times over with a comment? or like that *Tranſylvanian* Prince, whom *Maccovius* reports to have read the Bible over twentie ſeven times? Where ſhall we finde a *David*, who *meditates in the Law of God day and night*, preferring it before the *honey and the honey-combe*, before *thoughts of gold and ſilver*? or a *Job*, who *eſteemeth the words of Gods mouth more then his neceſſarie food*? Nay, have we not many proud, curſed *Politians*, who think it a *diſparagement* to their *parts* and *learning*, to condiſcend to the ſtudie of Scripture, and (as he ſaid) think *they never ſpend their time worſe then in reading it*? Do not idle *Romances*, and laſcivious Poems, and the like, take up the moſt of our youth-ſtudies? nay, amongſt us who look towards the Miniſtrie, doth not a nice and intricate *School-man*, an uncertain *Father*, an antiquated *Rabby*, juſtle out the Scripture? I ſpeak not againſt thoſe in their due order and meaſure; but I would not have *Hagar* drive *Sarah* out of doors. I would not have the *Hand-maids* courted, and the *Miſtreſs* neglected. If they be our παρεργον, let Scripture be our ἔργον. Prepoſterous ſtudying theſe, before we be well grounded and ſetled in Scripture-knowledge, doth oft fill the ſoule with ſuch notions, ſpeculations, and prepoſſeſſions, as we ſhall finde it very hard afterwards to vail and ſubmit to the ſimplicitie, and truth of the Goſpel. Nay, if the moſt pious, practicall, devout writings of men, (with which this age to the glorie of it abounds) hinder our ſtudie of Scripture, it is our ſin and provocation, and a high diſparagement of the word of God. Nor indeed can we with the ſame confidence and ſecuritie read them, as being oft mixed with errour, intereſt, and inconſiderate zeal, and thoſe other imperfections, which the frailtie of the beſt ſpirit betraies them to (as waters though never ſo pure in the fountain, will reliſh of that mine they run through): as we may promiſe our ſelves from theſe Oracles of God, penned by the unerring dictates and guidance of the Spirit of God. It is well known what worth *Luther's* works are of, yet he profeſſeth, *Odi libros meos, & ſæpe opto interire, quòd metuo nè morentur lectores, & abducant à lectione ipſius Scripturæ, quæ ſola omnis ſapientiæ fons eſt. That he hated his own books, and oft wiſhed them periſhed, leſt they ſhould be a means to withdraw men from the ſtudie of the Scripture, which is the onely fountain of true and ſaving wiſdome.*

Pſal. 19. 10. Pſal. 119. 72. Job 23. 12.

2. This

2. *This should put every one of us upon the search and studie of Scripture*; Which that we may do successfully,

1. *Be much in prayer:* that's the *key* to unlock these cabinets of precious jewels. *S. Augustine* hath two remarkable stories to this purpose; the one of *Antonius* the *Hermite*, who was so θεοδίδακτος, *taught of God*, that he could, though he knew not one letter, fully understand, and by heart repeat the whole Scripture: the other of a certain servant converted from Heathenisme to Christianitie, who, *triduanis precibus obtinuit, & codicem oblatum stupentibus, qui aderant, legendo percurreret, by three days continuing in prayer had such revelations, that, to the admiration of the beholders, he could read the whole Bible.* This is the course the Wiseman directs to, *Prov.* 2. 3, 4, 5. *If thou searchest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding,* &c. *Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and finde the knowledge of God.* This *S. James* exhorts to, *James* 1.5. *If any man lack wisdome let him ask of God.* This *David* practised, *Open my eyes* (as he praies to God, *Psal.* 119. 18.) *that I may see wondrous things out of thy Law.* The Spirit is the best, nay onely revealer, and true interpreter of Scripture. What is said of the Jews, that *when Moses is read the vail is upon their heart*, may be said of every one, who is not enlightned by the Spirit of God, whose eyes are not anointed with this *eye-salve*, a vail of *flesh*, a vail of *ignorance*, a vail of *corruption* is upon their hearts. To think to discover the things of the Spirit, without the Spirit, is to dream of seeing without light: now *prayer* is the way to come to the Spirit. *How shall not your heavenly Father* (saith Christ, *Luke* 11. 13.) *give the holy Spirit to them that ask him.* 2 Cor. 3. 15, 16. Rev. 3. 16.

2. *Avoid a proud and prying curiositie*: this darkens Scripture, when men are not content to know what God would have revealed, but wrest out of the Scriptures what was never intended in them. These are those οἱ στρεβλοῦσι, which *S. Peter* speaks of, 2 *Pet.* 3. 16. to whom he therefore saith, the Scriptures are *dark* and obscure: who play the *Chymists* with Scripture, and, as they endeavour to do with natural bodies, extort that out of them, which God and nature never put into them. How have the forced *Allegories*, obscure *Cabbalas*, impertinent nice *Criticismes* obscured and darkned revealed truth? which I am so charitable as to think rather *Essays* for exercising mens wits, then for interpreting and clearing the Scripture.

I think it a good way to understand Scripture, never to leave the *literal* sence, unless when it is inconsistent and repugnant to the analogie of faith, then we must seek a *figurative*, else not; as when we are commanded *to pluck out our right eye*, and *cut off our right* Matt. 5. 29, 30.

hand, which *in the letter* is repugnant to the command of *not killing*, this must be interpreted *figuratively* of parting with our nearest and deareſt corruptions, which are as near and dear unto us as a right hand, or a right eye.

3. *Reſolve to practiſe what you read and underſtand in Scripture*: this is the reaſon men profit no more in the Scriptures, they hear out of faſhion and cuſtome, they read out of curioſitie, not conſcience. It is grace in the heart, and obedience in the life, which makes men fruitfull in Scripture-knowledge: upon which the Apoſtle *Peter* grounds his exhortation, 2 *Pet.* 1.5,6,7. to *adde to our faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance*, &c. he ſubjoyns the reaſon, *v.*8,9. *If theſe things be in you and abound, they make you that you ſhall not be barren and unfruitfull in the work of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; but he that lacketh theſe things is blinde.* The Turk writes upon the out-ſide of his *Alkoran*, *Let no man touch this book, but he that is pure*; and the Philoſopher gives this reaſon, why a young man cannot be a profitable ſcholar in Moralitie διὰ τὸ κατὰ πάθος ζῆν, *becauſe guided by luſt and paſſion*; and the Apoſtle gives the ſame reaſon, why ſome were ever learning, and could never come to the knowledge of the truth, becauſe *they were led away by divers luſts*: on the contrarie, nothing improves knowledge more then holineſs, which *David* gives as an account of his knowledge, *Pſal.* 119. 100. *I underſtand more then the Ancients, becauſe I keep thy precepts.*

Ariſt. lib. 1. *Ethic. cap.* 3.

2 Tim. 3. 6, 7.

4. *Be diligent in reading the Scriptures*, which was *Pauls* charge to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 4. 13. *Give attendance to reading*; make it thy work and buſineſs. God is not wanting to the diligent and conſtant ſearchers of Scripture. When the Eunuch was reading the Prophet *Eſay*, God provides him an inſtructer; ſends *Philip* to him to teach him.

Acts. 8. 9.

I ſhall end all this with the exhortation of S. *Paul*, *Coloſſ.* 3. 16. *Let the word of Chriſt dwell in you richly in all wiſdome*; and S. *Peters* concluſion of his Epiſtles (2 *Pet.* 3. 18.) ſhall be the Concluſion of my Sermon; *Grow in grace and in the Scripture-knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: to him be glory both now and for ever.* AMEN.

FINIS.

THESIS

DE FIDE

JUSTIFICANTE

SUB RATIONE

INSTRUMENTI.

Quam

SUB PRÆSIDIO

ANTONII TUCKNEY,

S. T. D.

Ac in eadem Professoris Regii, Kalend. *Julii*,

1656. *in die Comitiorum*

CANTABRIGIÆ

Tuebatur

JOANNES FROST,

Collegii D. Joannis *ibidem Socius*,

pro gradu Baccalaureatûs in

Theologia.

CANTABRIGIÆ:

Ex Officina *Joannis Field*, Almæ Academiæ Typographi.

Anno Dom. MDCLVII.

ORNATISSIMO DIGNISSIMOQUE
VIRO,
ANTONIO TUCKNEY,
SS. Theologiæ Doctori, Collegii Divi Johannis
PRÆFECTO,
& in Academia Cantabrigiensi
Professori Regio.

NOn est instituti mei (*Reverende Professor*) quorumcunq; oblocutorum exceptionibus, in quas præfatio hæc incursura sit, obviàm ire: mihi abundè satisfactum erit, si ea, quæ ad hæc impulerunt, pietati Tuæ brevitèr exposuero. Inter alia, quæ filius charissimus, & nunquam satìs lugendus, mecum nuncupatoriè reliquit; hoc unicum præcipuè in votis habuit, ut siquid Theseos, vel Concionis hujus Typis mandaretur, sub Tui nominis Auspicio in lucem prodiret. Huic fidei-commisso eò libentiùs morem gessi, quò singularem erga Te observantiam testatam facerem, & aliquantulum pro eximia Tua in illum benevolentia gratitudinis τεκμήριον exhiberem. Alio insuper jure Exercitationes hæ patrocinium Tuum ambiunt, utpotè authoritate Tuâ, Tuóque consilio initæ, & peractæ.

peractæ. Lege cautum eſt, *Liberos Filii, licèt emancipati, ſi deceſſerit, in avi poteſtatem incidere.* Hoc ipſo nomine Authorem aſtrictum tenuiſti: nè graveris filii Tui Poſthumum, patrêque orbatum in legitimam tutelam accipere. Dum ego luctu & mæſtitiâ penè obrutus effundam vota, ut Deus gratiæ gratiâ Te ditatum augeat provehátque, ut Eccleſiam, Collegium, & Cathedram ornare pergas diutiſsimé.

Reverentiæ veſtræ

obſervantiſsimus,

JOAN. FROST.

Theſis.

Fides juſtificat ſub ratione inſtrumenti.

FIdem juſtificare *in præſenti quæſtione ſupponimus, ut ab omnibus Theologis ultrò conceſſam veritatem: Neque de* juſtificationis *vocabulo litem movebimus, quippe quod ſenſu* forenſi *&* judiciali, *ex idiomate cùm Ebraico, tum Græco, uſitatiſsimo inſuper Scripturæ dicendi modo, accipi debere (exceptis* Pontificiis *) abunde ſatis inter nos & Adverſarios convenit. Quid per* Fidem *volumus luculenter conſtabit ex* actu *ejus* formali; *quem ſtatuimus eſſe, non* nudum aſſenſum *cum* Pontificiis, *nec* πληροφορίαν, *ſeu* de ſalute certiorationem *(nè ſcrupulos & laqueos conſcientiis infirmorum injiciamus) : ſed* fiducialem innitentiam, *ſeu* recumbentiam in Chriſtum, *quem in fœdere Evangelico oblatum ſtatuimus eſſe* objectum ſpecificum *fidei juſtificantis. Fidei quæ juſtificat* objectum generale *aſſerimus eſſe* totum *Dei* verbum; ſpeciale, *Chriſtum* Mediatorem; formale *quod juſtificat, Chriſtum ut* Pontificem, Sacerdotem, *ut* λύτρον *&* pretium *redemptionis noſtræ; non quòd Chriſti* officia *in negotio juſtificationis disjungimus, ſed diſtinguimus: quam diſtinctionem, quia ut levidenſem, & luſoriam ſugillant Adverſarii, pari inſtantiâ viſum eſt dilucidare. Ac ſi quis morbo laborans & in mortis confinio poſitus, virum adiret curationem ab eo & ſalutem expectans, petens quem Theologum, Furis-conſultum, Medicum ſimul probè nôrit: ei dubio procul innititur & confidit, quà Medicus, non quà Theologus, aut Furis-conſultus; etiamſi ſit hæc omnia, & ſingulis horum pro re nata fungatur officiis. Suffragatur Scriptura, capitis ad* Romanos *quinti verſu nono;* δικαωθέντες ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ. Modus *autem, quo* Fides juſtificat, *impræſentiarum controvertitur; de quo quinque obſervavimus celebriorum Theologorum opiniones.*

Prima eſt eorum, qui exiſtimant Fidem juſtificare declarativè tantùm, & quoad ſenſum conſcientiæ internum. *Hæc* Helena, *hæc* Diana Antinomorũ; *quibus calculum adjecit acutiſsimus* Maccovius, *apud quem* fide juſtificari *nil aliud eſt, quàm quòd fide cognoſcimus, & ſentimus nos eſſe juſtos coram Deo. Hujus ſententiæ Hyperaspiſtes in diverſas eunt ſententias. Strenuus ille* Gratiæ divinæ *aſſertor, &* Remonſtrantium *Malleus (non ſine aliquo honoris titulo nominandus)* Twiſſius, *ab æterno factam electorum omnium juſtificationem voluit. Nuper laudatus* Maccovius *ab eo tempore quo Chriſtus promiſſus eſt in Mediatorem,* Geneſeos *capitis tertii verſu decimo-quinto.* Criſpus, Antino- pag. 791.

tinomorum *Anteſignanus & Coryphæus, in morte Crucis, cùm pœnas peccatis noſtris debitas perſolvit Chriſtus, nos à reatu ſolutos, & juſtificatos aſſerit. Alii juſtificationem fieri volunt, cùm Spiritus nos Chriſto unit; quam* unionem *fidei* antecedaneam *aſſerunt; quâ accedente dehinc oritur juſtificationis noſtræ ſenſus.*

Secunda eſt eorum, qui fidem *volunt* juſtificare diſpoſitivè & inchoativè; *in quantum radix eſt ceterarum virtutum, & qualitativa præparatio ſubjecti ad juſtificationis privilegium. Cui porrò adjungunt* Bellarminus, & Concilium Tridentinum, ſpem, timorem, dilectionem, pœnitentiam, propoſitum ſuſcipiendi Sacramentum, & propoſitum novæ vitæ. Nudum aſſenſum *volunt eſſe* diſpoſitionem; Fidem charitate formatam partem *iſtius* juſtitiæ inhærentis, *quâ coram Deo juſtificamur: hanc ſententiam junctis ſuffragiis* Pontificii *profitentur.*

Tertia eſt eorum, qui volunt fidem juſtificare formaliter, *in quantum actus fidei eſt res imputata, & à Deo virtute ſecundi Fœderis, per gratioſam acceptilationem habita loco iſtius perfectæ juſtitiæ, quam primum Fœdus poſtulabat. Hanc amplectuntur* Sociniani & Remonſtrantes. Fides eſt objectum imputationis, *inquit* Arminius, *epiſtolâ ad* Hippolytum. Deo viſum eſt fidem noſtram juſtitiæ loco nobis ducere; *ità* Socinus. *Sed pleniſſimè hanc explicant ſententiam* Remonſtrantes Dordrechtani. *Fœdus illud novæ gratiæ, quod Deus Pater per mortis Chriſti interventum cum hominibus pepegit, non in eo conſiſtit, quòd per fidem, quatenus meritum Chriſti apprehendit, coram Deo juſtificemur; ſed in hoc, quòd abrogatâ perfectæ obedientiæ legalis exactione, fidem ipſam & fidei obedientiam imperfectam pro perfecta legis obedientia reputet, & vitæ æternæ premio gratiosè dignam cenſeat.* *Lib. 4. de Servatore, cap. 4. Pag. 291.*

Quarta eſt eorum, qui volunt fidem juſtificare conditionaliter, *quatenus unà cum ſincera obedientia eſt* conditio *novi Fœderis, &* cauſa ſine qua non *juſtificationis. In hanc ſententiam eunt Doctores* Sociniani. Obedientia, quam Chriſto præſtamus, licèt nec efficiens nec meritoria, tamen cauſa ſine qua non eſt juſtificationis coram Deo: *Verba ſunt Anonymi Scriptoris* Sociniani. Fides non eſt accuratè loquendo, cauſa inſtrumentalis; ſed ſine qua non juſtificationis noſtræ: hinc enim dicitur nos fide juſtificari, *inquit* Smalcius. Diligenter cavere debemus, nè vitæ ſanctitatem & innocentiam cauſam juſtificationis noſtræ vel efficientem, aut impulſivam eſſe affirmamus, ſed tantummodo cauſam, ſine qua eam nobis non contingere decrevit Deus. *Verba ſunt* Socini *in* Synopſi juſtificationis. *Non difficile eſſet plura id genus, è* Crellii, Volkelii, Socini *ſcriptis proferre teſtimonia, ni vobis et tædio eſſet et faſtidio. Hæc obiter notare viſum eſt, ut ſentiamus quàm dolendum ſit, è noſtris etiam Theologis quoſdam, eósque* *Diſput. 4. contr. Fratz.*

e ósque (quod dolendum magìs adhuc) cùm eruditione, tum pietate inſignes, ſub infelici hoc Socinianorum *vexillo militare: útque intelligant juvenes ſe, dum in hanc opinionem vel cæcâ temeritate, vel nimiâ virorum admiratione abrepti, præcipites ſe dent,* Socini, *Hæreticorum peßimi, premere veſtigia.*

Quinta et ultima eſt eorum, qui volunt fidem juſtificare inſtrumentaliter, relativè *ſeu* organicè, *in quantum reſpicit* objectum juſtificans, *Chriſtum nimirum, cujus reſpectu capacitatem habet admißivam et receptivam. Hæc receptißima eſt Theologorum celeberrimorum ſententia, à qua mihi religio eſt vel latum unguem diſcedere: utpote quæ longiſsimè abeſt ab Hæreticorum erroribus, omnem præripit hominibus gloriandi anſam, operum elevat dignitatem, totámque juſtificationis gloriam Deo et Chriſto in ſolidum tribuit. Non vos latet* (Viri, Patres, Fratrésque) *quàm perplexa et nodoſa ſit hæc* juſtificationis *doctrina, quantæ de cauſa formali, meritoria, & id genus aliis in Scholis agitantur lites, quantóque cum ſententiarum animorúmque divortio. Inter omnes autem ſuper hoc fundamentali religionis noſtræ articulo controverſias, hæc, quam præ manibus habemus (ſi* Chemnitio *fides ſit habenda) non infimæ notæ eſt; cujus verba (nè videar hodie de lana caprina, aut rei nullius momenti, litem moviſſe, útque, ſi quod ſit in Auditorum mentibus, amoliar præjudicium) lubet hìc referre.* Controverſia (*inquit ille in loco* de juſtificatione) de cauſa inſtrumentali una eſt ex præcipuis, hanc enim doctrinam Diabolus odioſiùs oppugnat; quia bene nôrit cauſas efficientes ſine applicatione non prodeſſe nobis ad ſalutem, ideo ſpargit varias corruptelas, applicationem fieri operibus, vel propriis, vel alienis, vel fide & operibus ſimul. *Et alibi omne ſuum artificium eò confert, ut* organum applicationis *vel eripiat, vel labefactet, vel depravet: quod totis viribus conati ſunt* Pontificii, Sociniani, *utinam et non* è noſtris *nonnulli.*

Totam quam ſuſcepimus provinciam eâ, quam rei majeſtas patitur, et loci veſtrûmque ratio poſtulat, brevitate, quinque concluſionibus expediam.

Concluſio prima. Juſtificatio fidei non eſt declarativa quoad ſenſum, ſed conſtitutiva quoad ſtatum. *Cujus ratio in promptu eſt: quòd* ſenſus *juſtificationis oritur ex* actu reflexo, ipſa *juſtificatio ex* actu directo fidei *in Chriſtum recumbentis. Quin et juſtificari dicimur* ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ, coram Deo: *Ergò non* terminativè *tantùm in* conſcientia. *Juſtificationis inſuper ſenſum amitti poſſe, & à juſtificato abeſſe experiuntur ſæpius & conqueruntur Sancti. Hinc illæ* Davidis *lacrymæ, hinc frequentes Sanctorum planctus gemitúsque. Imò diu ſæpius eſt priuſquam Sancti aſſurgere poſſunt ad ſenſum juſtificationis ſuæ: qui poſtea per recidivationes peccatorum labefactatur, imò obruitur. Sen-* Rom. 3. 20.

ſus inſuper favoris divini fructus eſt, non eſſentia juſtificationis:
Rom. 5. 1. δικαιωθέντες ἐκ πίστεως εἰρήνην ἔχομεν, inquit Apoſtolus. Ceteræ virtutes, ut fructus Spiritûs, & juſtificationis χριτήρια, nos juſtos declarant, nullibi tamen iis juſtificationem adſcribit Scriptura. Et ut hæc veritas extra omnem controverſiæ ponatur aleam, perpendite locum Apoſtoli (ad Romanos cap. 5. verſ. 19.) Sicut per inobedientiam unius illius hominis peccatores conſtituti ſunt multi, ſic per obedientiam unius (ſcilicet Chriſti à Deo imputatam, & fide apprehenſam) δίκαιοι καθασταθήσονται: ergò non ſolùm declarativè in conſcientia. Ut autem antedictis erroribus tempeſtivè occurramus, dicimus

Primò, Juſtificationem ab æterno factam non eſſe. Agnoſcimus quid analogum juſtificationi in decreto Dei; quod tamen, cùm ſit actio immanens, non eſt productivum effectûs ad extra; neque aliquam efficit realem mutationem in ſubjecto: quæ ubicunque fit, ſive moraliter, ſive Phyſicè, neceſſariò fit per actionem tranſeuntem. Tritum eſt in Scholis, Prædeſtinationem nihil ponere in Prædeſtinato. Juſtificationis inſuper decretum ſupponit ſolum eſſe cognitum, actualis juſtificatio perſonæ poſtulat exiſtentiam: enimvero ubi nullus realis reatus, ibi abſolutio actualis impoßibilis eſt. Quod enim Maccovius cum Antinomis objicit, res ſcilicet ab æterno habere eſſe cognitum, nihili eſt, quippe quòd præcognitio divina, cùm ſit actus immanens, nil ponit in objecto. Neque diffitemur juſtificationem habere eſſe cognitum in mente divina ab æterno, quæ, cùm per actionem tranſeuntem completur, fit mutatio in ſubjecto, non in Deo; quia actiones tranſeuntes dant ſolùm extrinſecas denominationes Deo. Non diſſimili modo, ac ſi Architectus ſecum hodie ſtatueret cras domum adificare; exſtructâ domo, mutatio tranſit in objectum, manente Architecti propoſito. Et, ut quod res eſt dicam, verè portentoſa eſt hæc æterna juſtificatio. Elevat merita Chriſti, inania reddit omnia juſtificationis media, non liceret (quod Sanctis ſemper in uſu fuiſſe legimus) remiſſionem peccatorum, ſed remiſſionis ſenſum à Deo petere: hinc ſequeretur perinde juſtos eſſe electos antecedenter ad fidem ac poſt fidem; imò filios eſſe Dei
Epheſ. 1. 3. quos Scriptura pronuntiat filios iræ.

Secundò, Neque quamprimùm facta eſt promiſſio juſtificari dicimur, niſi virtualiter: hoc eſt, impletâ conditione, quæ fit per fidem. Certitudinem futuritionis fundatam aſſerimus in promiſſo, quo fidelitate ſuâ Deus ſe electis obſtringit, ob interventum ſatisfactionis Chriſti, & beneficium ſub conditione, & ipſam conditionem ex gratuita miſericordia conferre.

Tertiò, Neq; in morte Chriſti juſtificari dicuntur electi. Juſtificationem meritoriam in morte Chriſti agnoſcimus, dicente Apoſtolo,
2 Cor. 5. 19. Deus erat in Chriſto mundum reconcilians ſibi: hoc eſt, quoad pretii ſolutionem & dationem; cujus beneficium voluit in credentes ſolùm redunda-

dundare. Per ſeipſum fecit purificationem peccatorum noſtrorum, *ad* Hebræos *cap.* 1. *ver.* 3. *hoc eſt, quoad pretium, & ſacrificii perfectionem. Fide opus eſſe aſſerimus, non ad* ſolutionem, *ſed ad* applicationem. *Partum eſt* jus *ad juſtificationem morte Chriſti,* actualiter *fit fide. Ut debitor abſolvatur, requiritur non ſolùm* ſolutio *debiti à creditore facta, ſed deſideratur inſuper* acquieſcentia *creditoris in iſta ſolutione, &* acceptatio *à parte debitoris, quâ ſibi propriam faciat. Facillimè hæc ad juſtificationem accommodantur, ad quam requiritur, præter* acquieſcentiam *Patris in* ſolutione *pretii à ſponſore noſtro facti,* applicatio, *&* receptio *fidei: Utì pharmacum, à peritiſſimo licèt Medico præparatum, & morbo accommodatiſſimum, ægroto tamen non valet ad ſalutem, niſi ſumatur. Omnes promiſcuè ſub* condemnatione, *&* maledictione legis, irâ Dei, poteſtate mortis *eſſe, antecedenter ad fidem pronunciat Scriptura, non obſtante Chriſti ſatisfactione in cruce factâ. An Chriſtus loco electorum erat juſtificatus & abſolutus (quam juſtificationem* myſticam *vocat è noſtris vir doctus) mihi, fateor, adhuc non conſtat, neque ſum auſus, tacente Scripturâ, definire.*

Quartò, Falſiſſimum, utpote cùm ἄχραφον *tum* ἄλογον, *commentum eſt,* dari unionem cum Chriſto antecedenter ad fidem, *cùm ſpiritus nos Chriſto unit ingenerando fidem in cordibus noſtris.* Operantem *Spiritum agnoſcimus antecedenter ad fidem; ſaltem ordine naturæ; at* inhabitantem, *& nos Chriſto agglutinantem negamus.* Inhabitat Chriſtus per fidem in cordibus veſtris, *inquit Apoſtolus ad* Epheſios, *cap.* 3. *ver.* 17. *Et,* Promiſſum Spiritum accipimus per fidem, *ad* Galatas, *cap.* 3. *ver.* 14.

Ex ſupradictis conſtabit juſtificationem fieri in tempore, & concomitanter ad fidem, eodem temporis, licèt diverſo naturæ, inſtanti; & fieri per actionem tranſeuntem, *cujus effectus eſt* mutatio moralis, *non quoad* ſenſum *ſolùm, ſed quoad* ſtatum.

Concluſio ſecunda. Fides non juſtificat per modum diſpoſitionis, aut præviæ, & inhærentis qualitatis. *Hoc* Pontificiorum *commentum eſt, quorum* πρῶτον ψεῦδος *hac in re eſſe videtur, quòd juſtificationem fieri volunt per motum Phyſicum, productivum juſtitiæ inhærentis per modum formæ: ad cujus introductionem* Fidem (*hoc eſt,* nudum aſſenſum) timorem, ſpem, *id genus alias diſpoſitiones, ut ſubjectum qualitativè præparantes, poſtulant; prout factum cernimus in ordine ad productionem formarum Phyſicarum: cùm nos aſſerimus in juſtificatione fieri non* Phyſicam *&* poſitivam, *ſed* moralem *&* relativam *mutationem, utì infrà plenius patebit. Sufficiat interim monere præparatoriam hanc fidei juſtificationem repugnare,* Concluſ. 2.

Primò, Scripturæ.

Secundò, Rationi.

Tertiò, Doctrinæ *Pontificiæ.*

Primò, Scripturæ, *quæ nullibi dicit fidem* diſponere *ad juſtificationem, ſed* juſtificare *ſeu recipere* donum juſtitiæ *abſque operibus. At quocunque nomine vocetur hæc diſpoſitio, ſub* operibus *comprehenditur, ut diſertè loquitur Apoſtolus ad* Romanos, *cap. 9. ver.* 30. Quid igitur dicimus? Gentes, quæ non ſectabantur juſtitiam, juſtitiam apprehendiſſe; *Ergò ſine operibus præparatoriis. Impios inſuper (videlicet* antecedenter, *licèt non* reduplicativè *&* conſequenter *tales) Deum juſtificare aſſerit idem* Paulus *ad* Romanos, *cap.* 4. *verſ.* 5. *ideóque non per* fidem, ſpem, timorem, *id genus alias diſpoſitiones præparatos.*

Rom. 5. 17.

Secundò, Rationi: *quia hæ diſpoſitiones Hypocritis; imò dæmonibus inſunt, qui* credunt & contremiſcunt. *Peſſimè inſuper* ſanctificationem *cum* juſtificatione *confundunt* Pontificii, *quæ, cùm non* introducitur *in ſubjectum, ſed per* imputationem *fit, non eget præparatoriis diſpoſitionibus.*

Jac. 2. 19.

Tertiò, Doctrinæ Pontificiæ. *Quomodo enim hoc de diſpoſitionibus præparatoriis dogma cum opere operato Sacramentorum coharet (quod junctim profitentur* Pontificii) *ipſi viderint, vos judicate. Concludimus cum Apoſtolo*, Hominem juſtificari fide, *non ſolùm* ergò *ad juſtificationem* diſponi.

Rom. 3. 28.

Concluſio tertia. Fides non juſtificat formaliter, ità ut vel habitus vel actus fidei à Deo nobis imputetur ad juſtitiam, virtute Novi Fœderis. *Tum quia hoc modo conſiderata eſt pars* inhærentis *juſtitiæ, &* propriæ, *quam tamen Apoſtolus juſtitiæ, quâ juſtificamur, è diametro opponit, ad* Philippenſes, *cap.* 3. *verſ.* 9. Ut comperiar in Chriſto, μὴ ἔχων ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην, ἀλλὰ τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ. *Actus fidei opus eſt, ideóque fidei, in quantum juſtificat, contradicitur, ut liquet ex Apoſtolo, ad* Romanos, *cap.* 4. *ver.* 5. Ei qui non operatur, ſed credit, *&c. quæ verba ſi de actu fidei interpretemur ſenſus loci eſſet*; Ei qui non operatur ſed qui operatur fides imputatur ad juſtitiam; *ità verſu ſexto*, David beatum declarat, cui Deus imputat juſtitiam abſq; operibus; *quod perinde eſſet juxta hanc opinionem, ac ſi dixiſſet Apoſtolus*, Cui Deus imputat opus ſine operibus. *Dogma profectò hoc eſt periculoſum adeò, ut totam evertit juſtificationis doctrinam, imputationem juſtitiæ Chriſti deſtruit, & inanem reddit; legem ex parte ſaltem abrogat, quippe cui fides, cùm ſit virtus particularis, non adæquatè reſpondet; Deum inſimulat falſæ æſtimationis & judicii erronei, quippe qui imperfectum inſtar perfecti duceret; juſtificationis interciſionem ponit, ceſſante videlicet credendi actu. Quin & ipſa Fides ob multiplices, quibus laborat, imperfectiones eget miſericordiâ divinâ. Quòd autem ad gratioſam acceptilationem confugiant, oritur ex malè intellecta ſecundi Fœderis gratia, quæ in eo non conſiſtit, quòd Deus* minorem *nunc quàm olim* poſtulat obedientiam, *ſiquidem* lex creationis *eſt* indiſpen-

diſpenſabilis; *ſed quòd eam* obedientiam, *quam nos præſtando non eramus in Mediatoris perſona* gratioſè acceptat, (*cùm lex* perſonalem *poſtulabat juſtitiam*) *&* fide applicatam, *miſericorditer, virtute ſecundi Fœderis nobis* imputat, *ut materiam noſtræ juſtificationis. Quod attinet ad locũ illum Apoſtoli, quem ſubſternunt Adverſarii, ut erroris hujus fundamentum, ad* Romanos, *cap.* 4. *ver.* 3. Credidit Abrahamus Deo, & imputatum eſt ei ad juſtitiam; *interpretemur neceſſum eſt*, vel, *de juſtitia* facti *non* perſonæ, *ſicut actus Phineæ* (Pſalmo 106. *ver.* 31.) *dicitur* reputari ei in juſtitiam; *hoc eſt, probatus erat Deo actus*: vel, *ſi de juſtitia* perſonæ, *quò reſpicere videtur Apoſtolus, intelligimus fidem* metonymicè, relativè, concretivè, *ſeu* connotativè *cum objecto quod apprehendit. Cujus veritas liquet tum ex contextu*, verſ. 11. *vocatur* δικαιοσύνη τῆς πίστεως, *&* verſ. 13. διὰ δικαιοσύνης πίστεως: *Tum ex paritate phraſeos in Scriptura*, Petrus *Apoſtolus ſecundam ſcribit Epiſtolam* τοῖς ἰσότιμον ἡμῖν λαχοῦσι πίστιν, iis qui æquè precioſam fidem *cum ipſis Apoſtolis* ſortiti ſunt. *Quî verò hoc fieri poſſit ut quilibet fidelium parem cum Apoſtolis fidem habeat? non in* habitu, *qui fortior multò, nec reſpectu* actûs, *qui vegetior longè erat in Apoſtolis quàm in inferiori Chriſtianorum plebe: ideóque relinquitur ut ſit reſpectu* objecti, *Chriſti nimirum, quem totum infimus credentium amplectitur.* Ἰσότιμον πίστιν vocat Apoſtolus, non quòd in omnibus ſit æqualis, ſed quia eundem omnes Chriſtum, ejúsque juſtitiam fide poſſident, *inquit* Calvinus.

Patet inſuper ex analogia fidei, quâ ubique in Scriptura prædicatur juſtitia Chriſti, non ſolùm ut cauſa meritoria, (*quod ipſi fatentur* Pontificii) *ſed* materialis *juſtificationis noſtræ.* Per obedientiam unius juſti conſtituuntur multi, *ad* Romanos, *cap.* 5. *ver.* 19. Chriſtus à Deo nobis factus eſt juſtitia, 1 Corinth. *cap.* 1. *ver.* 30. Nos efficimur juſtitia Chriſti in eo: 2 Corin. *cap.* 5. *ver.* 21.

Liquet etiam ex rei veritate; niſi enim fides conſideretur objectivè, *nemo fidelium ad ſtatum juſtificationis aſſurgeret, niſi qui* gradum, *&* menſuram *fidei* Abrahamiticæ *attigit.*

A phraſi denique Pauli *alienum eſt*, illud imputari quod inhæret. Paulus *illud imputari dicit, quod quis nec habet, nec fecit. Sic Deus peccata noſtra imputavit Chriſto, quæ ipſe non fecit: pariter, quam nos non fecimus, nobis imputat juſtitiam Chriſti. Hanc comparationem inſtituit Apoſtolus* (*Epiſtolæ ad* Corinthios, *cap.* 5. *ver.* 21.) Fecit ut qui peccatum non novit, pro nobis peccatum eſſet, ut nos efficeremur juſtitia Dei in eo.

Concluſio quarta. Fides non juſtificat, ut conditio ſine qua non Fœderis unà cum operibus, & nova obedientiâ: vel ut concauſa & ſine qua non juſtificationis. *Fidem eſſe* conditionem *Fœderis &* cauſam ſine qua non *juſtificationis lubenter agnoſcimus, at ſub ea ratione* *Concluſ.* 4

one juſtificare fidenter negamus. Hoc enim conceſſo facultates *animæ*, intellectus, *&* voluntas, *perinde dici poſſunt* cauſæ *juſtificationis, utpote ſine quibus nemo juſtificatur. Fides ut conditio eſt in nobis, ea autem, quâ juſtificamur, juſtitia eſt extra nos, quam* inhærenti *opponit Apoſtolus, ad* Philippenſes, *cap. 3. ver. 9. Obedientiam agnoſcimus eſſe indiſpenſabile* medium *ſalutis, negamus eſſe* cauſam *vel* conditionem *ſatisfactionis. Quam diſtinctionem, quia fugillant Adverſarii, ex Scriptura liceat illuſtrare.* Spe ſalvi ſumus, *inquit Apoſtolus ad* Romanos, *cap. 8. ver. 24. Nullibi dictum legimus,* Spe juſtificati ſumus. *Conjunguntur fides & opera* quoad exiſtentiam, *non* quoad cauſalitatem. Opera *removemus non à* fide, *ſed à* juſtificatione. Operum neceſſitatem *profitemur, nè pietatis ſtudio poſthabito peccatis laxentur fræna; negamus* operum cauſalitatem, *nè gratiæ divinæ fiat præjudicium:* Si enim ex operibus, tum non ex gratia, *affirmante*
Rom. 11. 6. *Apoſtolo. Quod enim objiciunt Adverſarii, Apoſtolum vim juſtificandi præripere operibus* ex natura factis, *&* fidem antecedentibus, *non iis quæ* fidei fructus *ſunt, &* à gratia *promanant, tam falſum eſt, quàm quod falſiſſimum; quippe quòd Apoſtolus excludit opera* indefinitè, *& ſine aliquo additamento, etiam* pii, *&* credentis Abrahami; *ad* Romanos, *cap. 4. ver. 6.* Beatus cui Deus imputat juſtitiam ſine operibus, *non addit* legis, *ſed* indefinitè *quælibet opera excludit. Et verſu 5.* Ei qui non operatur, ſed credit in eum, qui juſtificat impium, imputatur fides ad juſtitiam: *quo in commate omnis* operans *opponitur* credenti; ergò *omnia, qualiacunque ſint,* opera *opponuntur* fidei. *Neq; Apoſtolus in tota hac diſputatione, in qua ex profeſſo de* juſtificatione *agit, opera operibus opponit, ſed opera ubique & fidem, quantùm ad juſtificationem, inter ſe committit. Neque agebatur tunc temporis controverſia, an hæc vel illa opera; ſed an fides vel opera juſtificarent. Quam litem appoſitiſſimè dirimit Apoſtolus, ad* Romanos, *cap. 3. verſ. 28.* Λογιζόμεθα γὰρ πίστει δικαιοῦσθαι ἄνθρωπον χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου. *Quo additamento ſæpius utitur Apoſtolus, non ut* differentiam *operum inſinuaret (opera enim, quæ ex gratia fiunt, ad legis normam exiguntur): ſed quia omnia à Deo in lege præcipiuntur. Imò ſæpius in Scriptura Apoſtolus renatorum opera à juſtificatione removet. Ad* Galatas, *cap. 2. verſ. 16.* Scientes non juſtificari hominem ex operibus legis, ſed per fidem Jeſu Chriſti, etiam nos in Jeſum Chriſtum credidimus, ut juſtificaremur ex fide Chriſti: *de ſe &* Galatis *loquitur jam renatis: aliquot enim jam annis antè* Galatæ *fuêre converſi, quàm* Paulus *illam ſcripſit epiſtolam. Quidni dicam materiam gloriandi ſubminiſtrare vel opera renatorum, ſi per ea juſtificarentur?* Non ex operibus, *inquit Apo-*
Epheſ. 2. 9. *ſtolus,* nè quis gloriaretur: *de operibus autem ex fide & gratia ortis loqui Apoſtolum patet ex proximo commate,* Ipſius opus ſumus creati in Chriſto Jeſu ad opera bona. *Sua etiam poſt converſionem (de*

præ-

præſenti enim loquitur ad Philippenſes, *cap. 3. verſ. 8.* ἀλλὰ μὲν γε καὶ ἡγοῦμαι) *opera* detrimenta *pronuntiat, & ſtercora. Cùm autem* Jacobus *dicit* hominem juſtificari operibus, non fide tantùm, *quod* Abrahami *& Rahab probat exemplis,* cap. 2. *quod unicum erroris ſui Adverſarii ponunt fundamentum, & cauſæ præſidium; non abs re erit Apoſtolos paucis conciliare. Quod facili fiet negotio, ſi* Paulum *de fide* viva, *& per opera efficaci, de juſtificatione* coram Deo, *& de iis qui opera jactabant, & propriâ juſtitiâ intumuerunt;* Jacobum *autem de fide* mortua *operibus deſtituta, de juſtificatione* coram hominibus, *& de* ſolifidianis, *qui poſthabito pietatis ſtudio fidei larvam venditabant, interpretemur. Quæ ſingula ex ipſo patent contextu. Fidem, quam intelligit* Jacobus, *dæmonibus tribuit verſu* 19. *&* πλὴν *vocat proximè inſequente.* Oſtende mihi fidem tuam, *verſu* 11. *ergò de* declarativa *loquitur juſtificatione.* Quæ utilitas, fratres, ſi quis dicat ſe fidem habere; *ergò eos alloquitur, qui inane jactabant fidei nomen, operibus vacuum, & à virtutis ſtudio alienum. Ut quod res eſt dicam, Opera renatorum cum fide conjungere in negotio juſtificationis, eſt ſapius coctam* Pontificiorum *Cramben recoquere: qui diſtinctionem hanc operum,* ante *&* poſt fidem *centies noſtris objecere, quo juſtificationis doctrinam per ſolam fidem labefactârent: quæ olim prora puppísque cauſæ noſtræ habita eſt, & primò jugulum petiit, & in prima reformatione lethale incuſſit vulnus, & caput imminuebat cauſæ* Pontificiæ. *Fundamentum hoc Religionis noſtræ,* articulus ſtantis eſt & cadentis Eccleſiæ, *ut olim* Lutherus. Galatas, *ut à gratia & Evangelio apoſtatas increpat* Paulus *eò, quòd opera cum fide miſcebant in negotio juſtificationis,* cap. 1. verſ. 6. *Peſſimè certè de Religione noſtra merentur, qui* Pontificium *hoc, imò purum putum* Socinianum, *dogma diu ab Eccleſiis noſtris exauctoratum populo demum propinant.* Opera quæ ex fide oriuntur, & ſunt fructus Spiritûs Sancti, adeò ad juſtificationem neceſſaria ſunt, ut ſine illis fides apprehendens Chriſtum juſtificare nullo modo poſſit: *verba ſunt* Andradii. In iis locis, ubi Apoſtolus fidem operibus opponit, de operibus ejuſmodi agit, quæ & perfectam, & perpetuam obedientiam continent, qualem ſub lege Deus ab hominibus requirebat; verùm non de iis operibus, quæ obedientiam, quam Deus à nobis qui in Chriſtum credimus requirit, comprehendunt: *verba legimus capite nono Catecheſeos* Racovienſis. *Quæ eo tranſcripſi conſilio, ut intelligamus ex eorum lacunis, quorum vel nomen deteſtatur quilibet qui Chriſtianus reverà vult audire, fluxiſſe putidam hanc* de concauſalitate operum in juſtificatione *doctrinam.*

Concluſio quinta & ultima. Fides juſtificat ſub ratione inſtrumenti; *cujus veritas per inductionem ex antedictis ſatis patet. Si enim nec* diſpoſitivè *nec* formaliter, *nec* conditionaliter *juſtificat;* re- *Concluſ. 5.*

linquitur ut rationem inſtrumenti *ſubeat in negotio juſtificationis. Cujus loco* Sociniani *Chriſtum*; Bellarminus *humanitatem Chriſti*; Concilium Tridentinum *vel re, vel voto, ſuſceptum Sacramentum*; *alii Fœdus novum ſubſtituunt ut juſtificationis* inſtrumentum. *Nos brevitati litamus*; *ſufficiat igitur in explicanda & confirmanda hac Theſi rerum capita delibare. Quod ut feliciùs fiat, hac pauca præmittenda duximus.*

Lib. de juſtificat. c. 2.

Primò, per [fidem] *intelligimus* habitum fidei, *quatenus ſe exerit per* actum, *& reſpicit* objectum, *Chriſtum videlicet & ejus juſtitiam*; *quo reſpectu dicimus eam eſſe animæ* inſtrumentum.

Secundò, [juſtificare] *Sumitur vel* activè, *pro actu Dei judiciali*; *vel* paſſivè *&* terminativè, *prout in credentem terminatur. Fidem eſſe* inſtrumentum *aſſerimus, non reſpectu* prioris, *cujus cauſam in ſolo Dei favore & gratia quærimus, nobis quod noſtrum non erat velut noſtrum imputantis*; *ſed* poſterioris: *Ideóque ex* inſtrumentalitate *fidei malè colligitur ab Adverſariis*, hominem ſe juſtificare. *Deus* activè *juſtificat credentem, homo non* ſe juſtificat, *ſed* credit ad ſui juſtificationem (*ad* Romanos, *cap.* 10. *ver.* 10. Corde creditur ad juſtitiam) *dum fide recipit Chriſtum ejúsque juſtitiam. Ideóque cùm dicimus* fidem juſtificare, paſſivè *intelligi debet*; *& idem ſonat ac* fide juſtificamur, *phraſi nimirum* metaleptica, *quâ effectus cauſæ* principalis *tribuitur* inſtrumentali; *ut* aratrum *dicitur* ditare agricolam: *inſtantia eſt* Auguſtini.

Tertiò, duplex eſt inſtrumentum *juſtificationis.* Externum *unum, videlicet Evangelium, quo offertur juſtificatio ſub conditionibus Fœderis. Remotè* Miniſtri *Eccleſiæ dici poſſunt* inſtrumenta *juſtificationis: unde* ligare, ſolvere, peccata remittere *dicuntur in Scriptura, videlicet* declarativè, *applicando remiſſionem pœnitentibus & credentibus.* Internum *alterum, objecti juſtificantis applicativum, &* tale inſtrumentum *aſſerimus eſſe* fidem: *quæ eſt quaſi manus* animæ applicantis, *ut Evangelium eſt manus* Dei offerentis *juſtificationem.*

Quartò, Inſtrumentum *eſt vel* Phyſicum, *&* Naturale; *quod Phyſicè operatur ad effectum principalis agentis, & quo poſito ex naturali neceſſitate effectus ſequitur : vel* morale, *&* ex inſtitutione, *per quod volumus omne medium à cauſa principali aſſumptum in ordine ad effectum, ad quod per ſe innatam non habet vim, &* ἐνέργειαν. *Hinc Scholaſtici definiunt,* Creaturam poſſe aſſumi à Deo ut inſtrumentum morale, licèt non elevari, ut ſit inſtrumentum Phyſicum creationis. Fidem *in juſtificatione conſideramus ut* inſtrumentum, *non* Phyſicum, *quaſi effectum pari neceſſitate, ac agentia naturalia per connatas qualitates effectus ſuos producunt, juſtificationem efficeret*: ſed morale, *cujus tota vis dependet ex divina inſtitutione: non aliter quàm* ænei ſerpentis *aſpectus valebat olim ad levamen & ſalutem Iſraelitarum.*

rum. Licèt interim fatemur dari paſſivam *quandam* aptitudinem (*quam non diffitentur Adverſarii eſſe* rationem *quare Deo viſum eſt hanc Fœderis conditionem inſtituere*) *juſtitiæ Chriſti apprehendendæ accommodam*; *quâ ex dignatione gratioſa utitur Deus ad talem finem. Perinde ac* Verbum & Sacramenta *ſunt* inſtrumenta, *quæ quicquid habent efficaciæ debent inſtitutioni divinæ. Per* inſtrumentum *igitur intelligimus* medium applicationis, *in cujus uſu ex ordinatione divina participes facti ſumus Chriſti, ejúsque juſtitiæ*; *quod* objectum *fides juſtificans eſſentialiter* connotat: *Non quòd fides ſit* conditio ſolutionis *pretii, vel* motivum voluntatis *divinæ ut velit noſtrî miſereri, quod præ ſe fert* Remonſtrantium *doctrina de* fide prævisa; *neque quòd fides ullâ* organicâ cauſalitate *juſtitiam Chriſti producat*; *ſed quòd* oblatam *in Fœdere Evangelico amplectitur.*

Quintò, Diſtinguendum eſt inſtrumentum efficiendi *ab* inſtrumento recipiendi. *Poſteriori modo* fidem *eſſe* inſtrumentum *aſſerimus. Fidem* agere *in apprehenſione Chriſti non negamus, &* moralem efficientiam *ei tribuimus, qualem patitur id genus inſtrumentorum natura; at* juſtificat *ratione* paſſivæ receptionis. *Agit mendicus dum manum extendit, at non eâ actione ditatur, ſed in quantum recipit theſaurum vel potiùs theſauro quem recipit. Neque hinc colligitur hominem ſe juſtificare magis, quàm ægrotos Chriſti temporibus ſe ſanare, quia credendi exerebant actus in ordine ad curationem: vel mendicum ſe ditare, quod ei qui eleemoſynam erogat aptiùs tribuitur, & meritò in ejus cedit laudes & honorem. Sic* fide *juſtificamur, ſed non* ex dignitate fidei, *ſed* ex dignatione divina, *cui de integro debetur tanti & tam gratuiti beneficii honos & gloria.*

Sextò & ultimò, Fides *conſideratur vel in* perſona juſtificati, *ità* radix *eſt omnium virtutum in quantum* operatur per charitatem; *vel in* effectu juſtificationis, *ſic* janua *eſt ad vitam æternam*; *vel in* actu juſtificationis, *& eo reſpectu dicimus eſſe* inſtrumentum, *non quatenus ad* extra operatur, *ſed quatenus ad* intra recipit *Chriſtum, in relatione ad quem tota vis fidei juſtificantis conſiſtit.*

Veritatem hoc modo explicatam quatuor firmabo argumentis, & perorabo.

Argumentum primum ſumitur ex frequenti *&* uſitatiſſimo loquendi modo in Scripturis, *in quibus* juſtificari *dicimur* ἐκ πίστεως, *ad* Romanos, *cap.* 5. *ver.* 1. διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, *cap.* 3. *ver.* 22. (per fidem Jeſu Chriſti, *ut objecti videlicet formalis*). διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι. Ibid. ver. 25. *iterum hìc fidei mentio fit* connotativè *ad* objectum, *utì ſæpius alibì: nunquam verò* διὰ τὴν πίστιν, *quaſi* habitum *aut* actum *fidei inſinuaret ſub ratione* conditionis; *ſed ut veram indigitet cauſalitatem, non* principalem, *ergò* inſtrumentalem: *neque aliter ſonant phraſes antedictæ* [ἐκ, διὰ] *quæ ſemper notant* inſtrumentum, *cùm ordinem dicunt ad*

effectum *cauſæ* principalis: *nullibi autem legimus homines per* amorem, *aut* pœnitentiam *juſtificari. Imò Scriptura terminis utitur* excluſivis *reſpectu omnium* univerſaliter *operum.* Χωρὶς ἔργων, *ad* Romanos *cap.* 4. *ver.* 6. ὐκ ἐξ ἔργων, *ad* Titum, *cap.* 3. *ver.* 5. διὰ τῆς πίστεως, ὐκ ἐξ ἔργων, *ad* Epheſios, *cap.* 2. *verſ.* 8. ὐκ ἐξ ἔργων ἐαν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησῦ Χριστῦ (*ubi obſervandum iterum* objectum connotari) *ad* Galatas, *cap.* 2. *ver.* 16. *è quibus ſingulis apertiſſimè conſtat, peculiarem aliquam cauſalitatem fidei competere in negotio juſtificationis.*

Argumentum ſecundum ſumitur à ſubordinatione fidei ad Deum, *ut cauſam* principalem *juſtificationis.* Formalis ratio *inſtrumenti eſt* ſubordinari *&* ſubſervire *cauſæ* principali *in ordine ad* effectum. *At hoc fidei proprium eſſe diſertè loquitur Scriptura.* Arbitramur fide juſtificari hominem, *(ſed à quo? Certè à Deo) ad* Romanos, *cap.* 3. *verſ.* 28. *Unde patet quàm nihili ſit palmare illud argumentum, quo triumphum, ſed ante victoriam, agunt Adverſarii,* [Si fides ſit inſtrumentum, tum vel Dei, vel hominis]. *Reſpondemus utriuſque diverſo reſpectu, Dei* ordinativè, *& ratione* inſtitutionis, *tum* efficienter, *&* collativè, *in quantum Deus nobis fidem, & per fidem juſtitiam Chriſti confert, quâ juſtificamur. Neque hinc ſequitur quod obſervat vir doctiſſimus, ut Deus* credere *dicatur, cùm* credere *ſit actus* immanens; *proindéque Deum non aliter denominat, quàm effectus* cauſam, *non ut affectio* ſubjectum. *Hominis autem* inſtrumentum *eſt reſpectu* receptionis, *&* applicationis *quoad* actum *fidei excercitum; quæ omnia evidentiſſima & firmiſſima habent in Scripturis fundamenta.* Deus unus eſt qui juſtificat circumciſionem ex fide, & præputium per fidem, *ad* Romanos, *cap.* 3. *verſ.* 30. *Ideóque Dei eſt inſtrumentum, quo utitur ut nobis conferat juſtificationem,* fide *ſæpius in Scriptura dicimur* recipere Chriſtum, *ad* Coloſſenſes, *cap.* 2. *ver.* 6. Joannis, *cap.* 1. *ver.* 12. Ergò *noſtrum eſt* inſtrumentum applicativum. *Unde oritur*

Tertium argumentum, quod deſumitur à peculiari reſpectu quem fides dicit ad Chriſtum, ejúsque juſtitiam. *Quicquid* inſtrumentaliter *recipit Chriſtum* inſtrumentaliter *concurrit ad* juſtificationem; *at hoc* fidei *peculiare eſt. Unde Scriptura utitur vocibus* λαμβάνειν, παραλαμβάνειν, *quæ ſignificant* recipere illud quod ab alio offertur, & traditur: *hinc* oculo, pedibus, manui, brachiis, *in ſacro codice* fides *comparatur; quippe quâ videmus, recipimus, amplectimur Chriſtum, eíq; innitimur ad juſtitiam, & remiſſionem peccatorum. Quorum fide facti ſumus participes,* remiſſionem peccatorum accipimus per fidem, Actorum, *cap.* 26. *ver.* 18. *& etiam* donum juſtitiæ, *videlicet Chriſti,* recipimus ſine operibus, *ad* Romanos, *cap.* 5. *verſ.* 17. *Quæ ideo ſæpius* ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη, *ad* Romanos, *cap.* 10. *ver.* 6. juſtitia fidei *vocatur, hoc eſt, Chriſti fide apprehenſa.* δικαιοσύνη Θεῦ διὰ

τῆς πίστεως, *hoc eſt*, recepta, *ad* Romanos, *cap.* 3. *verſ.* 22. *Nullibi ſcriptam legimus* δικαιοσύνην τῆς ἀγάπης, *vel* τῆς μετανοίας; ergò *phraſis illa peculiarem præ ſe fert emphaſin. Fides unicè innititur promiſſioni Evangelicæ, quâ promittitur & offertur; unicè apprehendit, & applicat ſatisfactionem Chriſti, quâ parta eſt juſtificatio & promerita, ideóque ſpecialem habet in juſtificatione* (*ſemper intelligo* paſſivam) *influxum. Profectò nugas meras mihi videntur agere, qui fidem fatentur eſſe* inſtrumentum receptivum *Chriſti, ſed non* juſtificationis. (*Ac ſi quis ſolem videre poſſit, non viſo & recepto lumine.*) *Cùm nos aſſerimus fidem juſtificare* objectivè, *in quantum recipit Chriſtum, ejúsque juſtitiam, (quæ Chriſto ut Mediatori* eſſentialis *eſt) ad quem effectum peculiarem habet aptitudinem.* Cognitio *recipit ſolam ſpeciem Chriſti ut objecti;* amor *tendit in Chriſtum ob excellentiam perſonæ, vel conſideratione bonitatis, & gratiæ Chriſti;* Fides *eum apprehendit in quantum noſtro loco mediatoriam præſtitit juſtitiam peccatis noſtris adæquatam, & reſpondentem, quam dum fides amplectitur Deus perſonam abſolvit à reatu & pro juſto habet.*

Argumentum quartum & ultimum ſumitur à remotione cauſarum inſtrumentalium, *quas* fidei *loco ſuccenturiârunt Adverſarii in negotio juſtificationis.* Socinianorum *dogma elevat meritum Chriſti.* Bellarmini *ſententia dividit naturas in officiis mediatoriis.* Tridentinum *dogma Sacramentorum ſupra quòd par & æquum eſt evehit efficaciam, quæ tamen externa & obſignantia inſtrumenta ſi quis dicit, non recuſo.*

Fœdus novum non juſtificat niſi aptitudinaliter, & remotè, *ex ſuppoſitione conditionis præſtitæ* fidei, *videlicet, ſine qua nemini efficax eſt ad juſtificationem. Quid? quòd non agitur controverſia de inſtrumento* externo, & offerente, *ſed* interno, & applicante, *quale fidem eſſe aſſerimus. Quod in promptu eſſet fuſiùs probare ex neceſſitate imputationis juſtitiæ Chriſti* activo-paſſivæ, *quam ratione acquiſitionis aſſerimus eſſe cauſam* meritoriam; *reſpectu* applicationis *eſſe cauſam* materialem *juſtificationis noſtræ. Unde juſtificamur, non ſolùm quia Chriſtus juſtus eſt, (uti calumniantur Adverſarii) ſed quia ejus juſtitia fit noſtra gratioſâ imputatione ex parte Dei, reali applicatione ex parte noſtrî, quàm (dum opera adjungunt ut concauſas) efficiunt* πεφύλλον, *& aſſumentum juſtitiæ noſtræ, quod certè Chriſto, ejúsque omnimodè perfectâ juſtitiâ indigniſſimum.*

Poſſem etiam in cauſæ ſubſidium eruditiſſimorum hominum ſuffragia accumulare ni tædio vobis eſſem; ſufficiat impræſentiarum duorum Theologorum, quos merito pluris æſtimant Adverſarii, teſtimonia coronidis loco apponere.

Primum Bradſhavi, Fide totâ, *inquit*, juſtificari dicimur, quia ea unicè apprehendit, & applicat juſtitiam Chriſti imputatam:

Alterum Reverendiſsimi Davenantii, *determinatione triceſimâ octavâ.* Fiduciæ in Chriſtum Mediatorem tribuimus inſtrumentalem vim juſtificandi potiùs, quàm ulli actui hominis peccatoris; quia conſtat eo modo juſtificari homines, quo gloria divina maximè illuſtretur, & honor ſalutis noſtræ ad ſolum Deum referatur. At qui aliis virtutibus & operibus ſtatuunt hominem juſtificari, gloriam ſalutis humanæ non integram Deo relinquunt, ſed merito ſuo aliquâ parte adſcribunt. Nos verò, utì totam gloriam eleemoſynæ promiſſæ & datæ non mendico accipienti, ſed liberaliter eam donanti, adſcribere ſolemus: Sic totam gloriam juſtificationis, & ſalutis humanæ, non fidei in Chriſtum tendenti, & eum ad ſe attrahenti, ſed Deo ipſi aſsignamus credentem gratuitò juſtificanti. *Hac ille. Et hanc gloriam ut Deo nos etiam ſervemus illibatam, concludimus*

Fidem juſtificare ſub ratione inſtrumenti.

FINIS.

THE LIGHT and DARKNESS OF *NATURE*,

Discovered
In a Sermon at S. *Maries* in *Cambridge*
on the Commencement-Sabbath,
June 29. 1656.

BY *JOHN FROST*, B. D.
then Commencer.

Deus est quod vides, & quod non vides. Senec.

Deus ubique secretus est, ubique publicus, quem nulli licet ut est cognoscere, & quem nemo permittitur ignorare. Aug. *ep.* 44.

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Acts 17. 23.

ἌΓΝΩΣΤΩ ΘΕΩ.

To the unknown God.

AND what ſuch an inſcription upon an Altar at *Athens*, the eye of *Greece*, and that the eye of the world? and yet ſo blind, as not to diſcover the true worſhip of the true God? Had this Altar been erected in ſome ruder, more obſcure part of *Greece*, it would have been juſt cauſe of wonder: for the *Grecians* were the moſt raiſed, and eminent of all the Gentiles, the moſt curious and inquiſitive ſearchers into the ſecrets of all knowledge; which the Apoſtle takes notice of, Σοφίαν Ἕλληνες ζητοῦσι, *the Greeks ſeek after wiſdome*. 1 Cor. 1.22. In which they were ſuch exquiſite proficients, that all other nations, even the *Romanes* themſelves, in compariſon of them, are in Scripture-phraſe accounted but *Barbarians*, *I am a debtour*, ſaith the Apoſtle, Ἕλλησι καὶ βαρβάροις: Rom. 1. 14. which he ſeems to amplifie, or explicate in the next words, σοφοῖς καὶ ἀνοήτοις, *to the wiſe, and to the unwiſe*. But that ſuch an inſcription ſhould be found at *Athens*, a famous Univerſity, ſo named from it's dedication to *Minerva*, the Goddeſs of Learning; the fountain from which the ſtreams of knowledge were derived to the reſt of the world; the ſeat of the moſt eminent Philoſophers, who here diſputed with *Paul*, (which Verſ. 18. therefore *Tertullian* calls *linguatam civitatem*, in the ſame place ſtiling the *Athenians caupones ſapientiæ & facundiæ*, the *ingroſſers* and *monopoliſers* of *knowledge*; whence as *Athenæus* calls *Rome* ὀπτομιλὴν τῆς οἰκουμένης the *compendium of the world*, ſo the *Grecians* tearmed *Athens* Ἑλλάδα Ἑλλάδος, the *Greece of Greece*, and μητέρα τοῦ λόγου, the *mother of reaſon*): yet that this *Athens* ſhould be no leſs infamous for Idolatry then famous for Learning, muſt needs much heighten and enhance your admiration. Let the advocates of the power and improvements of *nature produce their caſe*, and *bring forth their ſtrong reaſons* (as the *Prophet* ſpeaks) to evince a ſaving Iſai. 41. 21. knowledge of God attainable by them: ſurely wee ſhall have the leſs reaſon to credit them, ſince we have the wiſeſt, moſt raiſed and improved amongſt the Gentiles *confitentes reos* in the Text by the inſcription of their Altars Ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ, *to the unknown God*.

Lib. de Anima cap. 3. Lib. 1. Deipnoſoph.

Many ſuch Altars there were erected at *Athens*, if you credit

Grot. in loc. *Grotius.* Some of the Ancients, as *Oecumenius* and *Hierom* eſpecially, conclude, that this was not the whole inſcription, onely the Apoſtle makes uſe of ſo much of it, as might with advantage uſher in his diſcourſe of the worſhip of the true God, from verſe the four and twentieth to the one and thirtieth. *Calvin* conceives that the inſcription was not to any ſingle Deity, but *Diis omnibus peregrinis*. *Heinſius* doubts not, but it was erected upon the account of ſome ſignall unexpected benefit received; as thoſe which we read of in *Tacitus*, *inſcribo adoptioni*, and *ultioni*: whence the Apoſtle takes a ſutable argument, from the conſideration of the benefits of
Verſ. 24. 28. God, as *his making the world*, and *giving to all things life, motion*, and *being*, to urge upon them the worſhip and ſervice of the true God. Some think the Altar was erected upon the *Perſians* invading *Greece*. Others ſay it was upon the *Athenians* deliverance
A Lapide, Beza, Grotius. form the peſtilence, which they, having in vain attempted to remove by homage and ſervice to their *native* Gods, at laſt conſulting the oracle of *Apollo* receive a command to *luſtrate* their city by ſacrifice, but no God named, to whom they ſhould perform it: *Epimenides*, then at *Athens*, counſels them to let the beaſts for ſacrifice looſe, and where they ſtood ſtill there to erect an Altar, *Deo ignoto & propitio*; *To the unknown and propitious Deity*: which being accordingly performed, the plague ceaſed. Others thinke it was ſet up out of ſuperſtitious fear: leſt ſome Deity, whom they had omitted in their ſacrifices ſhould be incenſed, and ſo plague them. I ſhall rather conclude this inſcription to point at the true God: *neque enim ibi alius ignotus Deus præter verum*, ſaith the learned
Heinſ. in locum. *Heinſius*. Elſe the words following the text would ſcarce be reconcileable to truth, *whom ye ignorantly worſhip preach I unto you*; intimating the inſcription to have been to the true God. Though whatever the occaſion of the erection of this Altar was, it is plain the Apoſtle had a fair opportunity offered him to diſcourſe of the knowledge of the true God, of whom they betrayed moſt groſs ignorance by this inſcription, Ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ, *To the unknown God*.

The text preſents to your conſiderations, 1 the *light*, 2 the *darkneſs* of *nature*.

Firſt, The *light* of *nature*; it is inſcribed Θεῷ. Here is a God diſcovered and a worſhip acknowledged due to him by the erection of an Altar.

Secondly, The *darkneſs* of *nature*, it is Ἀγνώστῳ. Theſe diſcoveries are but darke, and imperfect, the true God of the Jews was but an unknown uncertain God to the wiſeſt of the Gentiles: as appears by that of *Lucan*.

---- &

—— *& dedita ſacris*
Incerti Judæa Dei.

Hence two notes obviouſly ariſe,

1. *Some diſcoveries of God may be made by the light of nature.*
2. *Natural light in it's moſt elevated and raiſed improvements, can make no full and ſaving diſcoveries of God.*

By this introductory explication of the words you eaſily perceive what is the ſubject of my preſent diſcourſe, which none I preſume can rationally judge unſeaſonable or unſutable either to the *place* I ſpeak in, in an *Athens*, an *Univerſity* no leſſe famous for *Learning* then that of old, and infinitely ſurpaſſing it for *Religion*: or the *perſons* I am to ſpeak to, men of eminent and raiſed improvements. If by the firſt of theſe I may quicken any ſtupid ſupine ſluggard to a diligent induſtry in reviving and improving thoſe principles, which God in nature hath implanted in him: and by the ſecond knock off any proud wits from reſting or vainly glorying in their acquired accompliſhments, (which is the ſin of moſt, and ruine of many Scholars) & perſwade them, amidſt their higheſt improvements & exquiſiteneſs in *Arts* and *Sciences*, to look up to God for *higher*, *ſpiritual*, *ſupernatural* diſcoveries; I ſhall compaſs the greateſt part of my deſigne in the choice of this ſubject at this time: which I ſhall endeavour in the *Application*, having firſt handled the points *Doctrinally*, which I ſhall now enter upon.

13. The *Socinian* (in this an enemy of *mans nature* as in the whole model of his doctrine he is of *Gods grace*) denies all natural, whether innate or acquired, knowledge of God.

The *Remonſtrant* advanceth the *light* of *nature* too high, while he aſſerts the improvements of it to be ſufficient to reach a *ſaving* diſcovery of God: either *immediately*, or (as thoſe who ſpeak with the greateſt modeſty aſſert) *mediatly* and *diſpoſitively* (*ut diſponantur homines ad prædicationem Evangelii*, as the *Dort-Remonſtrants* determine) as obliging God to the beſtowing and diſpoſing men to the receiving farther and *ſaving* diſcoveries from God. Each of theſe doctrines is ſuited, and fitted to comply with that *model* of *Divinity*, which theſe *Doctors* have broached and vented to the world.

The *Socinian* muſt not acknowledge man at firſt to have been created *after the image of God in righteouſneſs and knowledge*, (which *Smalcius* therefore calls *Idæa quædam in cerebro nata*) leſt he be neceſſitated to confeſs his immortality in that ſtate; and ſo death to have come into the world as the puniſhment of ſin: for then he muſt conſequently confeſs the neceſſity of a *ſatiſfaction* by Chriſt for that puniſhment, in order to *mans recovery*; to the compleating

Contr. Frantz. diſp. 2

of which this Divinitie muſt be acknowledged as neceſſarie, both which the *Socinian* blaſphemouſly denies. Now, as conſiſtent to all this, it is his intereſt to deny all natural knowledge of God, which we truly aſſert to be the reliques and remains of that Divine image, which God drew upon mans ſoul in his firſt creation.

The *Remonſtrants*, in order to uphold the Doctrine of *univerſal Redemption*, muſt of neceſſitie aſſert an univerſal ſufficiencie of means allowed to *all*, and conſequently to *thoſe* who never heard of the Goſpel; which their Engliſh Advocate knew well, and therefore roundly aſſerts, that *men may by the light of nature gather* τὸ ἔργον τῶ εὐαγγελίκ, *the effect and ſubſtance of the Goſpel*, and (page 11. of the *Pagans debt and dowrie*) that *the words of the heavens day and night, which they ſpeak in the ears of all nations, are the words of eternal life, as well as thoſe which our Saviour himſelf did ſpeak.* Surely S. *Peter* was of another minde, who, when our Saviour ſeems to charge him with an intention of Apoſtaſie, makes him this reply, John 6.68. *Lord, whither ſhall we go? thou haſt the words of eternal life*, but of this more anon. Thus you ſee while the *Socinian* would blow out the *candle* of the Lord, the *Remonſtrant* indeavours to ſet it up inſtead of, or to uſher in the *Sun of righteouſneſs*.

I ſhall ſpeak briefly to the firſt of theſe, as introductorie to the ſecond, which I chiefly intend.

Diſcoveries of God may be made by the light of nature two waies.

Firſt, By thoſe inbred and implanted notions, thoſe κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι, which are the remains of the image of God in decayed nature; thoſe principles which diſcovered themſelves in the very Heathen: which are partly ſpeculative, the firſt of which is that *there is a God*; partly practical, the firſt of which is, that *this God is to be worſhipped.* Rom. 2.15. This is the νόμ☉ χαρδὸς, which the Apoſtle takes notice of in the Rom. 1.18. very Heathens, which he elſewhere calls ☤ ἀλήθειαν, which ſtill remained impreſſed upon their hearts: the impriſoning which in *unrighteouſneſs* left them *without excuſe*, which it could not have done, had there been not remains of natural light to awaken and convince conſcience to a ſelf-condemnation. Had there not been ſome natural practical knowledge of *good* and *evil*, conſcience could not accuſe, but upon apprehenſions of a Deitie, as the ſupreme judge of the violations of ſome law known to them. The juſtice of God in puniſhing ſin, was one of thoſe natural truths, which the light of nature diſcovered, which the Apoſtle calls δικαίωμα τῶ Θεῶ, Rom 1.32. known to the Heathens. The very Barbarians could conclude againſt *Paul* as a murderer, liable to the vengeance of God, when Acts 28.4. the viper hung upon his hand. By theſe common notions I mean not

not the *intelligent faculty*, nor yet the *ſpecies* of things impreſſed in the minde, as if all knowledge were nothing but ἀνάμνησις, which was *Plato's* opinion; nor yet any *Idea* which God hath formed of himſelf in the minde of man; but ſome habitual notions and principles, as the remains of that habit of knowledge, which was part of the image of God upon man in his firſt creation: which lie indeed as ſparks under the embers till cheriſhed and blown up by acts of reaſon, improving them unto actual knowledge. In reſpect of which *Ariſtotles Raſa tabula* may go for a truth. But the general conſent of Nations, who had *ſine doctrinâ anticipationem quandam Deorum*, as *Tully* ſpeaks, their *wholeſome laws* for the *worſhip* of God, their *induſtrious Idolatrie*, that they would rather debaſe their nature to ſtocks and ſtones, to their *ſtinking garden-Gods*, then worſhip none, are pregnant arguments of apprehenſions of a Deitie by the light of nature, which is the ſame in all men, *quoad prima principia & ſecundùm rectitudinem, & ſecundùm notitiam*, as *Aquinas* determines, *as to the firſt principles both of knowledge and practiſe.*

Lib. 1. de nat. Deor.

1². 2^dæ. Qu. 94. art. 4. 13.

The *Socinian* thinks he ſufficiently confutes all this by ſaying, That the Heathen had it *ſolâ famâ*, *onely by report and tradition*: but *Tully* tells us, they had it *duce naturâ*, and the Apoſtle φύσει, *by nature*. The firſt principles of which may be born down, and obſcured by Paſſion, cuſtome in ſin, Satans blinding mens minds; eſpecially if to all theſe be added Gods giving men up εἰς τὸν ἀδόκιμον, for the abuſe of this *natural light*, as we read he dealt with thoſe Heathens, *Rom.* 1. 28. but they can be no more wholy aboliſhed then reaſon it ſelf. I like the determination of *Alenſis* in this point, who aſſerts the *light* and *Law* of nature to be *delibilis quoad effectum*, but *indelebilis quoad naturam*, which he fitly illuſtrates by the Eclipſe of the *Sun*, in which the light is obſcured, but not extinguiſhed.

Rom. 2. 14.

Parte 3ª. Qu. 27. membr. 3. art. 1.

Men may arrive at that ſenſleſsneſs and ſtupiditie, as to live without actual apprehenſions of God, ἀπηλγηκότες; but none can be without thoſe principles which dictate, and, if improved, would lead them into ſome knowledge and diſcoveries of God. I call to witneſs the ſecret laſhes of thoſe, who moſt endeavour to ſtifle and choak theſe natural principles, which God left in corrupted nature, for the upholding humane nature (for man without theſe would be equalized to beaſts) and that by their light and improvement man may ſeek after, and arrive at ſome knowledge of God. Ζητεῖν τὸ Κύριον, the Apoſtle tels us was the end of them: that which may be known of God is manifeſt *in them*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 1. 19. ἐν αὐτοῖς. That's the firſt.

Ephes. 4. 19.

Secondly, By the *contemplation* of the Creatures, and Providences of God. Natural reaſon by a *climax*, and gradation of cauſes and effects, may aſcend to a diſcoverie of a *firſt being*; ſomething of the nature of which is diſcoverable by Natural light, it being one received Maxime of Reaſon, that *What ever is in the effect is in the cauſe, either formally or eminently*, and therefore the light of nature may diſcover not onely the *exiſtence*, but ſome of the glorious Attributes and Perfections of God. The Apoſtle mentions his Eternitie and Power, as knowable by the creatures of thoſe who had not the Goſpel. It is true, while the Heathens *dazled* with the glorie of the creature, terminated their contemplation in them, the creatures proved occaſions of their Idolatrie and Atheiſme. *Pliny*, that great ſearcher into Nature, denies a Deitie: and *Galen* hath nothing (as ſome obſerve) by which in charitie he can be excuſed from *Atheiſme*, but one ſingle *hymn* in a good mood compoſed *Creatori*. Yet the creatures in themſelves are as ſo many mirrors, in which is diſcoverable the glorie of the Creator, which the *Pſalmiſt* tell us, *Pſal.* 19.1. *the heavens declare*, namely *objectively*, as giving man juſt occaſion to celebrate the glorie of the Majeſty, Power, Wiſdome, and Goodneſs of the Creator. From whoſe creating all things, the Apoſtle argues the Gentiles into an acknowledgement of a worſhip due to God. *We preach unto you, that ye ſhould turn from your vanities unto the living God, who made heaven and earth.* I finde *Auguſtine* in his Confeſſions, thus beſpeaking God, *Cœlum*, (ſaith he) *& terra, & omnia quæ in iis ſunt, undique mihi dicunt, ut te amem, nec ceſſant dicere omnibus, ut ſint inexcuſabiles.* *Job* ſend us (*chap.* 12.7,8,9. verſes) to the *creatures to learn God.* Can a man ſee a fair exquiſite picture, and not admire the Artificer? *ex pede Herculem*, Natural light may trace God by thoſe foot-ſteps he hath left of himſelf in every creature. So from the management and ordering of affairs in the world, reaſon diſcovers the Power and Wiſdome of God. *Tully* concludes that nothing is ſo manifeſt, when men contemplate the heavenly bodies, as that there is *aliquod numen præſtantiſſimæ mentis, quo hæc regantur, ſome admirable wiſdome to manage them*: and the Apoſtle tels us, *Acts* 14.17. *God left not himſelf*, ἀμάρτυρον, *even amongſt the Heathens*, which he proves by Gods *giving* them *rain* and *fruitfull ſeaſons*, the iſſues of his providence, though they had not the Goſpel-teſtimonie of God.

Rom.1.20.

*Lib.*2.*Hiſt. nat.cap.*7.

*Lib.*10.*cap.*6.

*Lib.*2 *de nat. Deor.*

It is true, the belief of a God was ſometimes weakned and ſhaked by obſerving the *ſeeming inequality of providential diſpenſations* to good and bad. *Cur bonis mala, & bona malis*, was a queſtion which puzzled them, which *Seneca* hath (I had almoſt ſaid, divinely) reſolved:

reſolved: and no wonder when Scripture tells us of *Job*, *David*, *Jeremiah*, the Saints of God were at a loſs and ſtand upon the conſideration of the providence of God in this particular: but theſe did but retard not overturn their acknowledgements of a God, of whom there are ſuch viſible diſcoveries in the leaſt creature (for God is *maximus in minimis*) that *Auguſtin* profeſſeth he doubted more ſometimes *whether he had a ſoul, the effects of which he daily experienced, then, utrùm in hac rerum univerſalitate ſit Deus, whether there were a God ruling the world.* *Soliloq. cap. 31.*

It is true, what ever may be known by the creature is in more legible characters in Scripture: whence the Apoſtle ſaith, that *by faith we believe that the worlds were framed.* The *creation of the world* is a truth diſcoverable by *natural light*, though the wiſeſt Philoſophers erred much in the manner of it, which *Moſes* hath exactly deſcribed. The *Platoniſts*, as *Auguſtin* tells us, aſſerted the bodies of men to be produced by their *minor Deities*, though their ſouls were created by God. The ſame truth may be the *object* of *ſcience*, as made out by *rational demonſtration*; and of *faith*, as built upon the authority of God in *Goſpel-revelation*: whence God falls under the object both of *Metaphyſicks* and *Divinity*. Ὁ Θεὸς ἐφανέρωσεν, ſaith the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of thoſe who were deſtitute of *Goſpel-light*. God hath manifeſted ſomething of himſelfe to them namely by that *common light* by which he *enlightneth every one*, *who comes into the world:* to wit, by the *light of nature*, which improved may bring us to many, though no *ſaving* diſcoveries of God. And that brings me to the ſecond *Truth* contained in the *Text*: though it bee Θεῷ, yet it is Ἀγνώστῳ, whence ariſeth the ſecond aſſertion. Heb. 11.3. *Lib. 12. de Civit. Dei. cap. 26.* Rom. 1. 19. Joh. 1. 9.

That natural light in its moſt elevated and raiſed improvements can make no full and ſaving diſcoveries of God. *Doctrine.*

In the handling which point I ſhall not dare ſo far to intrude into the Arke of Gods ſecrets, as to enquire or determine what extraordinary way God may take to manifeſt himſelf *ſavingly* to thoſe, who had only the guidance of *natural light*. *Secret things belong to God, revealed things belong to us:* but if God did uſe ſuch, as for my part I will not *limit* the *holy one of Iſrael*, I aſſert, Deut. 29. 29.

Firſt, It was not as the *iſſue* of *natural improvement*; nor

Secondly, A *fulfilling* any *promiſe revealed* in the Word; nor

Thirdly, Any *retribution* by way of *diſtributive juſtice*; nor

Fourthly, Any *anſwering a juſt claim* could be made to farther *communications:* for

Firſt, Suppoſe a man to have improved *natural light* to the utmoſt height, and this is but *ſuppoſitio per impoßibile*;

Secondly, Suppoſe him to have attained all *moral* virtues *in gradu Herpico*;

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Suppoſe him moſt *induſtrious* and *quick-ſighted* in the ſtudy of the *creatures* and the *providences of God*: yet I aſſert that all this cannot reach to any *ſaving* diſcoveries of God, upon this five-fold ground.

1. Becauſe *natural light* can reach no diſcoveries of Chriſt, whom *Chryſoſtome* thinks to be here meant by *the unknown God*, τὶς ἦν ὁ ἀγνούμενος ἀλλὰ ὁ Χριστός. The *Athenians* were wont to worſhip the Gods of all nations, whence the Apoſtle juſtly chargeth them of overmuch ſuperſtition, *verſe.* 22. and, becauſe they knew not Chriſt whom the Chriſtians worſhipped, they erected this Altar to him under the notion of Θεὸς ἄγνωστος: however this may be but a conjecture, certain it is that *the utmoſt light of nature improved cannot diſcover Chriſt*. You know the old charg, which *Auguſtine* lays againſt *Tullie's* works, that he could not finde the name *Jeſus* in them. *Plato* ſeems to bid the faireſt for ſuch a diſcovery, when he ſaith κόσμε ἔπηξε λόγος, which ſounds like that Scripture, *Joh.* 1. 3. *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made:* but the learned *Caſaubon* well notes that *Plato's* λόγος differs vaſtly from S. *John's* λόγος, *that* being only the *ſupream reaſon* and *wiſdome* uſed in the *creation*, which *natural light* might diſcover from the creatures; the *other* the *eternal ſubſiſting word* made known only by the Scriptures. There is a natural connexion between God and the creature, as between the *cauſe* and the *effect*, ſo one may be a due *medium* of diſcovering the other; but there is no connexion imaginable between the creature and a Redeemer: ſome indeed lead us a tedious circuit here, and tell us that *natural light* diſcovering God to be *juſt*, and yet obſerving his *patience*, might from thence gather a *ſatisfaction* made by a *Mediatour*; but I preſume you eaſily discerne a *non ſequitur* in this Argument: for the *patience of God* argues at the greateſt advantage but a *reprieve*, not a *pardon*. For it is oft exerciſed towards the *veſſels of wrath* as the Apoſtle tells us: or if it might argue the *mercy* of a *Creatour*, it could not rationally conclude a *purchaſe* made by a *Redeemer*, for the diſcovery of whom *natural light* was never intended, which ſhould have been moſt perfect, had man perſiſted in innocency, yet the diſcovery of a Saviour would then have been as unneceſſary as it is now impoſſible by the *light of nature*, which remained in *Adam* after his fall, who yet never dreamt of a Saviour, but lay under fears and terrours of an offended juſtice, till God revealed to him the promiſe of *the ſeed of the woman*.

In locum.

Exercitat. lib. 1.

Rom. 9. 22.

Gen. 3. 15.

But ſuppoſe *natural light* could reach the knowledge of a Mediatour, yet not of Chriſt as the perſon, which yet is indiſpenſably neceſſary, if Scripture may be admitted *umpire*; *This is life eternal*, &c.

&c. Joh. 17. 3. And, *There is no name elſe given under heaven whereby we muſt be ſaved*: without whom whoſoever dare promiſe any ſalvation, S. *Auguſtin* doubts *whether that man ſhall be ſaved by Chriſt*: & yet ſome dare entail it upon every Religion, which is the ground of mere *Scepticiſme* and equalizeth *Turky* and *India* with *England*. The Apoſtle deſcribes thoſe who had onely the *light of nature*, therefore to be *without hope*, becauſe without Chriſt. The *Magi*, though Aſtrologers, yet needed the guidance of an *extraordinary ſtarr* to lead them unto Chriſt: of whom when *Peter* had made that eminent confeſſion, our Saviour tells him that *fleſh and bloud had not revealed it unto him, but his Father*. Matt. 16. 16, 17. This *Sun of righteouſneſs*, as that in the firmament, is only diſcovered by its *own* light.

Acts. 4. 12. *Serm.* 14. *de verbo Dom.*

Epheſ. 2. 12. Matt. 2.

Secondly, Becauſe *natural light* cannot diſcover the *means* of ſalvation, as *juſtification, regeneration, faith, repentance*: which are matters onely of Goſpel-revelation, if the Scripture may be heard to ſpeak. The Apoſtle gives this as the reaſon of his high valuation of the Goſpel, becauſe it onely was the *power of God unto ſalvation*, and he concludes expreſly that there is no *ordinary way* of *faith* but by *hearing*. *How ſhall they believe on him of whom they have not heard?* yes, ſaith the *Remonſtrant* ſo they might by the preaching of the creatures; *Sun, Moon* and *Stars*: for *verſ.* 18. it is ſayd, *Have they not heard? yes, their ſound is gone out into all the earth*, which by the *Pſalmiſt* is ſpoken of the creatures manifeſting God. True, the Apoſtle uſeth that Scripture by way of accommodation, to note the intent of Goſpel-preaching, not thereby to licence the creatures as preachers of it: but to note the extent and ſucceſs of the Apoſtles preaching in the world, ὁ φθόγγος αὐτῶν, not of the *creatures* but of the *Apoſtles*, and thoſe *whoſe feet bring the glad tidings of peace*, verſ. 15. *Natural light* can never diſcover *faith in Chriſt* as the *means* of *ſalvation*: thoſe who would tie that faith mentioned by the Apoſtle, *he that will come to God muſt believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder*, &c. to a faith in God onely as *creatour* ſhould in my opinion do wel to conſider, that God ſince the fall is a *rewarder* to none but through Chriſt as *Mediatour*, who therefore muſt conſequently be included in the object of that faith by which we pleaſe God. So *repentance* is not diſcoverable by the *light* of *nature*, it was a riddle to the Apoſtles themſelves that *repentance unto life* ſhould be given to the *Gentiles*.

Rom. 1. 16, 17. Rom. 10. 14.

Pſal. 19.

Heb. 11. 6.

Acts 11. 18.

So the *righteouſneſs* of *juſtification* is indiſcernable by *natures light*, it is in the Goſpel onely that *the righteouſneſs of God is revealed from faith to faith*: yet the diſcovery of all theſe is neceſſary to ſalvation. *He that believes ſhall be ſaved. Except ye repent, ye ſhall periſh,*

Rom. 1. 17.

Mark 16. 16.

riſh, Luke 31. 3. Theſe are thoſe myſteries into which the Angels deſire παρακύψαι, to *ſtoop that they may pry into*: and is the light of nature more prying then the Angelical underſtanding? By the Church is *made known to the Angels the myſteries of ſalvation*: and can the Heathens read them in the ſtars? I think *Chemnitius* was not too ſevere in his charge, when he calls ſuch aſſertions, *non humana, ſed diabolica ludibria fidei juſtificantis, & verbi divinitùs patefacti.*

Ephes. 3. 10.

Thirdly, becauſe the light of nature cannot diſcover the true worſhip of God. Verſe 22. Ἀγνοοῦντες εὐσεβεῖτε, as S. *Paul* chargeth theſe ſublimated *Athenians*. The light of nature led them not to a true object of their worſhip: the Apoſtle ſaith, *Gal.* 4.8. they did *worſhip to them who were no goas*; nay, to devils, and not to God. But ſuppoſe the right object of worſhip, yet the due manner is not diſcoverable by natural light, but onely to be learned from the word of God. S. *Paul* lays it to the charge of the Gentiles, *Rom.* 1.25. that *they worſhipped the creature more then the Creatour.* Παρὰ τὴν κτίσιν, *beſides*, as Mr. *Mede* ſaith, it ſhould be rendred: but if they did worſhip the onely true God, as *Auguſtin* thinks, and *Lipſius* contends on the behalf of his *Stoicks*; yet in ſuch a manner as God could not accept. *Tertullian* is expreſs, *Eò irreligioſior Ethnicus, quò paratior: the more zealous, the more ſuperſtitious.* The *Samaritan*-worſhip was no leſs magnificent and pompous, then that at *Jeruſalem*, yet being not ſuitable to the word of God, our Saviour rejects it, *John* 4. 22. *Ye worſhip ye know not what: But ſalvation is of the Jews:* Why? becauſe they had the true worſhip according to the word of God, which natural light cannot diſcover. Nay, nothing hath more prejudiced Spiritual, Goſpel-worſhip, then meaſuring it by mans reaſon, which hath alwaies begat pompous, ſuperſtitious outſides in worſhip, the eaſineſs and ſplendour of which hath made them gratefull to corrupt nature.

Verſe 22.

Fourthly, From the *neceſsitie of divine ſupernatural revelation*, in order to ſaving diſcoveries of God: the Apoſtle ſpeaks expreſly, 1 *Cor.* 2.14. that *the natural man perceives not the things of God*; neither indeed can he, ἀνὴρ ψυχικὸς, *the ſouly man*, elevated by the higheſt improvements of reaſon and underſtanding, if deſtitute of the Spirit, cannot reach the things of God. That this is the proper importance of the word ψυχικὸς, appears from the Apoſtle *Jude*, verſe 19. ψυχικοὶ πνεῦμα μὴ ἔχοντες. *Any man, ſolis naturæ facultatibus præditus*, ſaith *Calvin*; *qui humanæ tantùm rationis luce ducitur*, ſaith *Grotius*, *who hath no other guidance then the light of nature*, is he, to whom S. *Paul* denies a poſſibilitie of any ſaving diſcoveries of the things of God. The outward ſhinings of the Goſpel

In locum.
In locum.

Goſpel can bring us to no ſaving knowledge, unleſs the Spirit withall ſhine into the heart to give *the knowledge of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*; much leſs can the dim light of nature: if thouſands remain blinde under the full beamings and ſun-ſhine of the Goſpel, no wonder they ſhould be in the dark who have onely the candle-light of reaſon. 2 Cor. 4. 6.

Theſe enlightnings of the Spirit will appear neceſſarie, if we conſider,

1. *Mans corrupted condition*, in which he wants not onely light, but eyes; and theſe the Spirit muſt communicate; the outward diſcoveries of the Goſpel are ineffectual to it without the Spirit, though Chriſt himſelf, *the Sun of righteouſneſs*, diſplayed many beams of glorious light in his miracles and doctrine, ſpeaking *as never man ſpake*, ſtill the Phariſees remained in the dark; our Saviour gives you one account of it, *Matt.* 13. 11. *Unto you is given to know the myſteries of the kingdome, but to them it is not given*, much leſs can the moſt vigorous ray of natural light effect this. Could it diſcover the *object*, it cannot renew and change the *faculty*, nor open the *blinde* eyes, which alone is the work of the Spirit, which therefore S. *Paul* prays for on the behalf of his Epheſians, *Epheſ.* 1. 17. that God would *give them the ſpirit of revelation to the knowledge of himſelf, that the eyes of their underſtanding being enlightned, they might know what was the hope of his calling*, and ſo on. *No man hath ſeen the Father at any time but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.* John 1. 18.

2 *The manner of theſe diſcoveries*, which is *ſpiritual*, which the Apoſtle gives as the reaſon why the *natural man perceives them not*, πνευματικῶς ἀνακρίνεται. Every *object* is diſcovered by a ſuitable light, therefore the light of reaſon can no more reach the myſteries of the Goſpel, then the light of *ſence* can the *objects* of *reaſon*. The Author of the Ἀπολύτωσις in my opinion ſtrengthens this argument, while he endeavours to elude it, for he would have the ψυχικὸς to be νήπιος ἐν Χριστῷ, *the babe in Chriſt*: for certainly if he, who hath ſome meaſure of ſpiritual diſcerning by divine illumination (as the leaſt Saint hath) cannot reach ſuch diſcoveries, they who are wholly deſtitute of the illumination of the Spirit cannot attain to them.

Fifthly, From the *Scripture-deſcription* of thoſe, who had onely the guidance of natural-light, deſcribed to be *without Chriſt*, *without hope*, *without God*, Epheſ. 2. 12. *Alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance and blindneſs of their minds*, Epheſ. 4. 18. *Not to know God*, 1 Theſ. 4. 5. to be *darkneſs* in the abſtract, *Epheſ.* 5. 8. And but *to grope after God*, Acts 17. 27. ἵνα ψηλαφήσειαν, as the *Egyptians*

ptians under their *thick darkneſs*, or the *Sodomites* when ſtruck with blindneſs: & farther characterized as thoſe who had a diſreliſh of the
1 Cor. 1. 23. Goſpel, which was to them but *fooliſhneſs*. Nay, the moſt improved of them were the greateſt oppoſers of the Goſpel; you have here not onely the leſſer voluptuous *Epicurean*, but more ſtrict, refined, elevated and ſevere *Stoicks*, one of whoſe principles was to *love virtue for virtues ſake*, oppoſing S. *Paul*, and eſteeming him but a *babler*, and a *ſetter forth of ſtrange gods*, while he preached Chriſt.
Verſe 18.
Verſe 19. *Chryſoſtome* thinks their bringing him to *Areopagus* was to puniſh him, as they had done *Socrates* to death by two hundred eightie one ſuffrages, for *innovating in religion*, ſuch an undream't of thing was a Jeſus amongſt the wiſeſt Philoſophers even at *Athens*, who ſet up their Philoſophical *principles* in oppoſition to the Goſpel: upon which account the Apoſtle warns his *Coloſſians*, to *beware leſt they be ſpoiled by Philoſophy*, Coloſ. 2. 8. Not that the Apoſtle decries all uſe of Philoſophy (as ſome in our daies, it is hard to ſay whether with more ignorance or impudence, do) but only ſo far as it is κενὴ, and ἀπάτη, and ſurely all is not ſuch, unleſs it be in vain to be rational, that is to ſay, to be men; for Philoſophy is nothing but the genuine birth of right reaſon: and *res Dei ratio*, ſaith *Tertullian* (the *candle of the Lord*, ſaith *Solomon*) who yet decries Philoſophers, as *Hæreſiarcharum Patriarchas*, ſo far as corrupted; but the errours of Philoſophy do no more argue the uſeleſsneſs of Philoſophy, then the errours of Divines evacuate the ſtudie of Divinitie. Theſe belong to Philoſophy no otherwiſe then wens or boyls to the bodie, which being cut off, or cured, the bodie remains uſeful and neceſſarie. Philoſophy is not oppoſite, but aſſiſtant to Divinitie (and while *Hagar* will wait upon *Sarah*, no reaſon why ſhe ſhould be thrown out of doors) though Philoſophers have oft been the greateſt enemies, and oppoſers of it. To ſumme up all, if thoſe who had onely the light of nature be thus in the dark, if neither Chriſt, nor the means of ſalvation, nor the true worſhip of God were diſcoverable by it, it's ſufficiencie to any ſaving diſcoveries, may, I hope, from the premiſes be rationally concluded.

But the *Remonſtrants* have one ſalve for all this, which is that the (*facienti quod in ſe eſt*) improvements of the light of nature, though they be not immediatly ſufficient to ſalvation, yet do diſpoſe to the receptions of farther communications of grace, and ſaving
Pag. 327. diſcoveries of God: ſo the *Dort-Remonſtrants* determine. Truth is, they have ſo many ſubterfuges in making out a ſufficiencie of means to thoſe who had onely the light of nature, that we may ſay of them, what the Hiſtorian obſerves of ſome of the enemies of the

the *Romanes*, *Major aliquantò labor eſt invenire quàm vincere.* Give me leave a little to trace thoſe footſteps I obſerve they have left behinde them in their writings, as to that univerſally pleaded, *facienti quod in ſe eſt.* I ſay,

Firſt, Who ever improved natural light and abilities to the utmoſt? If the *Remonſtrants* pleaſe (though I think it will not quit charges) to ſend out a *hue* and *cry* after ſuch, I am confident the return will be a *non eſt inventus*, nor could they, though oft ſollicited to it, bring one inſtance of any who have by natural improvements arrived at faith: could any have been produced, we ſhould have heard of it with both ears long before this time. *Arminius* ſure was ſenſible of this, That none ever improved nature to the height, therefore in his writings againſt *Perkins* flees to a *minùs malè*, thoſe who improve *ſomewhat better* a natural light then others. But then I demand,

1. What degree of improvement ſhall diſpoſe for farther grace? and,

2. Whether all, except ſome few of the moſt profligate and vicious, be not upon this account diſpoſed for ſaving grace? eſpecially if we ſtand to the verdict of the *Dort-Remonſtrants*, who determine all to be diſpoſed, *qui omnem rationis uſum non excuſſerunt*, and then few, if any, are excluded.

Secondly, How this aſſertion differs from the *Popiſh* merit *ex congruo*, I ſhall leave it to you to judge, and to them to make out. I am ſure both are equally contradictorie to the Apoſtle, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Who hath called us not according to works, but according to his own purpoſe, and grace*: but if upon improvements of nature, it certainly is of works.

Thirdly, Doth not this Doctrine friendly ſhake hands with old *Pelagianiſme*, in making grace and nature of the ſame latitude and extent? *Mutant vocem propter horrorem hominis Hæretici evitandum, ut ſic eandem pravitatis ſententiam Sophiſtici palliatam introducant: ſicque corda ſimplicium facilius corrumpunt*; they are the cenſure of the profound *Bradwardine* in this very particular: they gild the pill to make it more gratefull to the vulgar, and while they hugge the *Hereſie*, they would not be branded for *Hereticks*. To make any *antecedaneous* works of ours but the *cauſa ſine qua non* of *grace*, is the higheſt that ever *Pelagius* went, if you credit the ſame profound Author. *Lib.* 1 *cap.* 26. *Ibid.*

Fourthly, God is no way obliged to make farther diſcoveries of himſelf upon the improvements of nature:

1. The improvements themſelves cannot oblige God, as being not acceptable to him, the higheſt moralities of the Heathens, be-

ing but *corrupt fruit* of a *corrupt tree*, Matt.7.18. and being not the actions of *perſons in Chriſt*, nor *iſſuing from faith*, *without which it is impoſsible to pleaſe God*, Heb.11.6. cannot bring any obligation upon God.

2. God hath not engaged himſelf by promiſe, to make ſuch additions of *grace* upon the improvements of nature: for

1. Then God ſhould oft be falſe to his promiſe, it being evident that he hath oft beſtowed his Goſpel and grace upon thoſe, who have leaſt improved their naturals, as upon the *Corinthians*, who were the groſſeſt of ſinners; *Tyre* and *Sidon* were better then *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida*, yet the Goſpel was denied to thoſe, given to theſe.

1 Cor. 6.10.

Matt. 11.22.

2. There is no ſuch promiſe upon record in the word of God; if there be, we demand the Text, and it is at hand, *Habenti dabitur*. A very great encouragement for you indeed (*My Fathers, and Brethren of the Miniſtry*) to be diligent in improving your talents of Miniſterial gifts and abilities: for theſe are meant in the Parable, the talents were given when the Maſter went into a far countrey. Chriſt when he aſcended gave theſe gifts, *Paſtors*, *Apoſtles*, and the reſt. Miniſterial gifts are like the *widows oyle*, which encreaſed *by being poured out*; whereas *wrapping theſe talents in a napkin*, by a careleſs negligence or remiſsneſs, endangers the loſs both of our *talents*, and of our *ſouls*, *Take from him the talent*, verſ. 28. *Caſt the unprofitable ſervant into uttter darkneſs*, verſ.30. but here is not the leaſt aſſurance, or promiſe given of *grace* upon the improvements of *nature*. The improvement was in the ſame kinde, and ſo the good uſe of *naturals* may be recompenſed with a ſuperaddition of greater natural abilities: as God crowns the improvements of *grace* with farther degrees of *grace*. Beſides the immediate reſult of the good improvements of theſe *talents*, was *glorie*, *Enter into the joy of thy Lord*, which the *Remonſtrants* themſelves will not have to be the reward of a good uſe of *nature*, but onely a collation of *ſaving grace*.

Matt. 25.29.

Matt.25.14. Epheſ4.8,11

Verſe 23.

God therefore is free from all obligation, either by *mans merit*, or his *own promiſe*. Yea, but God will do it, *ſine aliqua obligatione, ex mera liberalitate*, ſaith *Corvinus* oft in ſeveral places of his writings againſt *Moulin*; but we may juſtly wonder how *Corvinus* came to be of Gods ſecret councel, that he can determine what God will do, where there is no promiſe declaring that will; or what aſſurance can be given to any of *grace* upon the improvements of *nature*? where there is no promiſe to engage God, or found any well-grounded expectation. And what leſs then the height of impudence is it for the creature to fix laws to the Creatour,

tour, and preſcribe methods to God, which he hath not fixed in his word; but this method is laid *ipſâ æquitate Dei naturali*, ſaith *Corvinus*, *upon the equitie of Gods nature*, which obligeth him to it. But is it not as raſh pride and preſumption, to determine of Gods juſtice, otherwiſe then God hath done in Scripture? no, but God ſaith, *What could I have done more for my vineyard?* Eſay 5.4. but what? becauſe God gives a ſufficiencie of outward means to his Church, ſhall his equitie therefore oblige him to give ſufficiencie of *inward grace*, to thoſe who are without the Church? I leave you to judge of this *Logick*, and ſhall conlude this point with that excellent determination of *Alvarez*, *Nulla lex fuit unquam ſtatuta de dandis auxiliis gratiæ facientibus totum quod in ſe eſt ex facultate naturæ, neque Chriſtus morte ſuâ meruit, aut merere voluit talem legem: God never made, and Chriſt never did, or would merit ſuch a law, which ſhould oblige God to the conferring of grace upon the improvements of nature.*

Fifthly, Are not the *Remonſtrants* in this Doctrine direct *Antipodes* to Scripture? which every where reſolves all ſaving diſcoveries and communications from God, into his diſcriminating will, not mans *previous* improvements. *Cur his conferat, præteritis aliis, pendet ex miſerecordia & libertate Divina*, our Divines ſolidly determined at *Dort*: ὅτι οὕτως ἐγένετο εὐδοκία, ſaith Chriſt, bleſſing his Father for communicating himſelf to thoſe who were leaſt diſpoſed, *Matt.* 11.25. *Even ſo, Father, for ſo it ſeemed good in thy ſight. God will if you will*, ſay the *Remonſtrants*: *I will becauſe I will*, ſaith God, *Rom.* 9.15. *If you improve, God cannot be wanting to you*, ſay the *Arminians*: *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth*, ſaith the Scripture, *verſe* 16. But after all this there is one ſhift more, *Deus paratus eſt dare fidem omnibus, quantum in ſe eſt*; why then certainly omnipotent grace can effect it: *certo ordine*, ſaith *Corvinus*, which neither *Corvinus*, nor any man elſe can diſcover. Nay, he never denies ſpecial grace, *niſi ſpretæ vocationis reſpectu*, ſay the *Dort-Remonſtrants*, *unleſs the common call be refuſed*: wo were to the beſt of us, did Gods grace depend upon ſuch a condition, for who doth not refuſe *common calls*? nay, without *ſpecial* grace we cannot but refuſe them. *Nemo bene uti poteſt libero arbitrio, niſi per gratiam*, is *Auguſtins* Divinitie, and our Saviours doctrine too, *John* 6.44. *No man can come to me except the Father draw him.* True, but God gives an *univerſal aſſiſting* grace to all in order to the good improvement of *natural* light: this is the plea, which their great Engliſh Advocate makes for them. But (*Brethren*) this is a *Chymæra*, and a dream, which the Scripture gives us no ground to believe: nay, that tells you that God ſuffered thoſe

Act. 2. *Theſ.* 2.

thoſe who had onely the *light* of *nature*, the Gentiles, *to walk in*
Acts 14.16. *their own ways*, that is to ſay, *extra ſuam gratiam degere*, if *Proſpers* gloſs may be admitted, *to live without the neceſſary ſupplies of his grace.* Beſides, it would be reſolved, whether this aſſiſting grace be effectual or no: if ſo, then all muſt be in a capacity for *ſaving* grace: if effectual, or ineffectual, according to the compliance of mans will, then all is ſtill reſolved into *nature*, nothing given to *grace*; which is the height of *Pelagianiſme*. *Sed quorſum hæc perditio?* may ſome ſay, *To what purpoſe is all this waſte of time and words?* I ſhall hope to evidence it no labour in vain, by diſcovering the practical importance of this truth in the *Application*, which I ſhall with all poſſible brevitie diſpatch.

Application.

Firſt, This may help us to diſcover the ſandy foundation on which the Doctrine of *univerſal redemption*, and conſequently the whole fabricke of *Arminianiſme*, ſtands. For, if this piller be pulled down, the whole building falls about their ears, which makes them ſo induſtriouſly voluminous in aſſerting this doctrine above all the reſt. Or if the purchaſe be particular, then the purpoſe of God, the execution of which that purchaſe makes way for, muſt be particular; the neceſſary conſequents of which muſt be the certain efficacy of *grace* and *perſeverance of Saints*, becauſe Gods purpoſes cannot be fruſtrated. Now this Doctrine of *univerſal redemption* cannot be upheld without the deſignation of ſufficient meanes afforded to all men, which to thoſe who never heard of the Goſpel can be nothing elſe but the improvements of nature: God not affording, nay (that I may prevent that common cavill *Deus paratus eſt*) reſol-
Acts 16.6. ving not to afford, the Goſpel to many of them. *Paul* was expreſly forbidden by the holy Ghoſt to preach the word in *Aſia*: and the
Matt. 10.5. Apoſtles at firſt commanded not to goe into the way of the Gentiles. Well but though they had not the Goſpel, yet *non defuerunt media quædam communiora*, ſaith *Corvinus*: but what other thoſe ſhould be beſides the light and improvements of nature is not imaginable, the inſufficiency of which to ſalvation hath, I hope, been in ſome meaſure evinced by the former part of this diſcourſe.

Secondly, Hence be perſwaded to ſet your ſelves in oppoſition to this doctrine, in doing which you appear for the honour of Gods grace and Goſpel. *Bradwardine* juſtly entitled his book *de cauſa Dei*, when he wrote againſt the *Pelagians*: whoever peruſeth it ſeriouſly will finde it a moſt ſoveraigne Antidote againſt the poyſon of *Arminianiſme*, againſt which in this point it is Gods and your intereſt to appear.

Firſt,

First, As you are *miniſters of the Goſpel.* The Doctrine of the ſufficiency of the light of *nature* vilifies and debaſeth your office: for what need the Commiſſion of Chriſt to his Apoſtles and their Succeſſours *to teach all nations*, if God had before commiſſionated and impowered Sun, Moon, and Stars to do it? or what need the Stars in the *right hand* of Chriſt, if thoſe in the *firmament* have light enough to lead us to him? Nay doth not this argue you the greateſt impoſtours, while you impoſe *hearing, reading, prayer, conference, meditation, grapling with the difficulties of Scripture* upon the people in order to the knowledge of God and Chriſt: which an *Indian* or *American* can arrive at by the contemplation of the creatures and providences of God? Matth. 28. 19.

Secondly, As you are *Scholars.* This Doctrine, I apprehend, makes *Univerſities* and *Commencements* uſeleſs: no need ſure of the *Schools of the Prophets*; you may go without any expences to ſchool to the creatures. What need youth hazard their eyes in ſtudying the *apices* and *points* of the *Greek* and *Hebrew* Text, for the underſtanding of the *New* and *Old Teſtament*, (in the latter of which ſome of natures Advocates tell us, there is not a word to be found of faith in Chriſt) which the Gentiles can arrive at by the improvement of Nature, and read written in the legible characters of the heavenly bodies?

Thirdly, As you are *Chriſtians* eſpecially: for this Doctrine,

1. *Robs you of your priviledges in the enjoyment of the Goſpel and means of grace.* Surely, the Apoſtle was out when he put a μάλιστα to this as the *greateſt* priviledge of the Jews, that *to them were committed the Oracles of God:* and our Saviour miſtook, when he ſaid, *Salvation was of the Jews.* Why it ſeems by this Doctrine the Gentiles were every whit as near it, whom yet the Apoſtle deſcribes to be *without hope.* And ſurely we Chriſtians do but flatter our ſelves in a *fools-paradiſe*, while we imagine our ſelves ſo highly advanced in our priviledges above the *Indian* or *American*, who by this Doctrine can oblige God to give them that grace, which we profeſs no claim to after our utmoſt improvements of the Goſpel; but ſay as our Saviour hath taught us, *We are unprofitable ſervants.* What great priviledge is it to enjoy Ordinances, if the creatures, and providences of God, can bring any to a *ſaving* diſcovery of him? Or what great advantage to be planted within the *pale* of the Church, the *incloſed garden* of God, if the dew of grace fall as plentifully upon the *wilderneſs* of the world? Or what need their being *added unto the Church who ſhould be ſaved*, if they might as well have attained it out of the Church? Certainly *(Brethren)* God cannot but be highly provoked by ſuch undervaluing theſe high Goſpel-priviledges. Rom. 3. 2. Joh. 4. 22. Epheſ. 2. 12. Luc. 17. 10. Acts 2. 47.

2. *It voids the exerciſe of Chriſtian duties, it deſtroys a Chriſtians gratitude and thankfulneſs*. It is in event to tell God that he was at an unneceſſary expence, when he gave us the Goſpel; and it muſt needs dull and take off the edge of our devotions for the Heathen, and quench all zeal, and cut the ſinews of all endeavours for bringing them over to the embracing of the Goſpel; and tells us we are guilty of a fooliſh ignorant commiſeration when we pity them. Nay, they might rather (were this Doctrine true) pity us, who go about a circuit for that knowledge, which they have a more compendious way to.

Thirdly, Then no reaſon ſo highly to admire (as ſome do) the *moralities* and *improvements* of the Heathens, which as *glow-worms* might have ſome *glimmering* luſtre in the night of *ignorance*; but now the *Sun of Righteouſneſs* is *ariſen*, they appear to be but of an *earthly* extraction. *Putantur eſſe virtutes, in quibus regnat ſuperbia & quædam ſibi placendi altitudo ruinoſa*, ſaith *Auguſtine*. A *vein* of *pride* and *vain-glory* run through all their moralities, which beſides in the beſt of them were *checkquered* with ſome groſſer ſins.

Lib.21. de Civit.Dei, cap.16.

Fourthly, Let us with *thankfulneſs* advance the *mercy* of God, in making known himſelf to us by Goſpel-diſcoveries, he was but Θεὸς ἄγνως to the beſt of the Heathen: but *in Judah is God known*. Bleſſed be his name, we can ſay, in *England* is God known. *Raritas ipſa pretium augeat*, ſaith *Calvin*. *God hath not dealt thus with every nation*. The *Pſalmiſt* might well cloſe up with a, *Praiſe ye the Lord*, &c. Let us commiſerate and pray for thoſe who ſit in darkneſs, let us in *Goſhen* pity *Egypt:* but let's not advance *nature* in them to the diſparagement of the *grace* and Goſpel of God amongſt our ſelves: leſt while we would ſeem *charitable*, we prove *unthankfull*, and by magnifying the *light* of *nature*, we diſparage the *light* of the *Goſpel*, and rob God of his freeneſs, and ſpecialty of his grace. Holy *Bernard*, complaining to Pope *Innocent* of *Abelardus* (Profeſſour at *Paris*, who it ſeems amongſt many other errours, had broached this, which I have been diſcourſing of,) cenſures him thus, *Dum multùm ſudat quomodo Platonem faciat Chriſtianum, ſe probat Ethnicum*; *While he would make Plato a Chriſtian, he proves himſelf a Heathen*. And certainly thoſe, who ſo highly advance *natural light*, can have but low, mean, and very undervaluing thoughts of the Goſpel.

Pſal.76.1.

In 1 Cor. 2. 14.

Pſal.147. 20.

Fifthly, *Improve Goſpel-diſcoveries of God*, by walking anſwerably to ſuch revelation, let your converſations be ſuch as become the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt. Let's bluſh that moralities in a Heathen ſhould out-ſhine Chriſtianitie in us. We know more, let's not practiſe leſs. Let's not, as *Salvian* ſpeaks of ſome, *Gentes agere ſub nomine Chriſtiano*; but let every one, who *names the name of Chriſt*, depart

Phil. 1.27.

2 Tim.2. 19.

depart from iniquity: otherwiſe our *knowledge* of God will but increaſe our *ſtripes*. Though the utmoſt improvements of nature cannot ſave the Heathens, (excuſe them they will in part, *Fabritius* ſhall fare better then *Catiline*) yet the abuſe of it condemned them: they *periſh without the law*, Rom. 2. 12. And if this left them without excuſe, that they *held natural truth in unrighteouſneſs*; and *when they knew God, glorified him not as God*, as the Apoſtle ſaith it did; how much more inexcuſable ſhall the abuſe of Goſpel-light, and *impriſoning* it by ſin, leave Chriſtians? *Solons*, *Socrates*, *Scipioes*, *Catoes* will appear in judgment againſt many pretended Chriſtians: *It ſhall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon.* When God comes to adminiſter juſtice upon the ungodly: it will be πρῶτον Ἰουδαίου. Darkneſs ſeems never ſo diſmall as to thoſe, who go immediately from the light: the darkneſs of hel will be ſadder to none, then to thoſe, who fall into it from under the light of the Goſpel. The Pagans plea of ignorance will not excuſe him, becauſe voluntarily contracted, and wilfully lived in; but a Chriſtians improved knowledge will much more condemn him.

Luke 12. 47. Rom. 1. 18, 21. Matth. 10. 15 Rom. 2. 9.

Sixthly, *Then let's not pride our ſelves in our natural improvements, in our parts and endowments.* We are here in a place of improvement, and let us improve to the height (for queſtionleſs we muſt be accountable to God for our *talents* of *natural abilities*, *depth* of *judgment*, *acuteneſs* of *wit*, *ſtrength* of *memory*, *quickneſs* of *apprehenſion*, which I wiſh they did really believe, or ſeriouſly conſider, who abuſe theſe to the reproach of Religion, and oppoſing the truths of God): but let's not reſt in theſe, as in themſelves ſetting us a whit the nearer to the *ſaving grace* of God. Nay, if not ſanctified, and joyned with humility, they may ſet us at a greater diſtance from God, and heaven. Great *parts* and *gifts* are not *juſt matter* of *pride* and *vain-glory*; but *arguments* of *uſefulneſs* and *engagements* to *ſerviceableneſs* for God; for, *to whom much is given, of him much ſhall be required.* Theſe will heighten our account when God ſhall examine how we have *traded* with his talents, how *honoured* him, or *benefitted* our ſelves or others by the knowledge we have of him.

Indeed *pride* is the Scholars ſin, ἡ γνῶσις φυσιοῖ: there was a *tumour* of *pride* breeding in the Apoſtle, by reaſon of his multitude of revelations, had not God let it out by the *thorn in the fleſh*. That *chain* of *gold*, which adorns my neck, helps to ſink me deeper, if I be a drowning; *Arts* and *Sciences* are your *ornaments*, but if not ſanctified, may ſink you the deeper into perdition. *Surgunt indocti & rapiunt cœlum*, wes a ſad complaint of old. One *dram* of grace will ſave a man, when a *talent* of *gifts* oft preſſeth men to hel.

1 Cor. 8. 1. 2 Cor. 12. 7.

Seventhly, Let us examine, *whether there be not many amongſt thoſe, who goe for Chriſtians, to whom God is* Θεὸς ἄγνωστος, *many who know as little of God, as if they lived in America.* I believe, you (*my Brethren*) who deal with the multitude, finde this too ſadly true, that many worſhip God upon no other account, then the *Romanes* did their *Jupiter*, or the *Epheſians* their *Diana*; becauſe he is the God of the *nations*, and *country*, in which they were born, and their *fore-fathers* God, and his worſhip in *credit*, and under the magiſtrates command: who ſerve God by tradition more then out of conviction of judgement. *My Brethren*, our ſpirits ſhould be ſtirred
Verſ. 16. in us (as *Pauls* was) with an affection *mixed* of *grief* and *compaſſion*, when we obſerve this. But may not we (even at our *Athens*) finde ſome to whom God is an *unknown* God? I hope not; yet (*Brethren*) notwithſtanding all our high-raiſed notions and ſpeculations of God, he is truely in a Scripture-ſence *unknown* to ſo many of us as know him not;

1. *Experimentally*. The Devils have more notions of God then the greateſt Philoſophers in the world. It is poſſible for a man to have many conceptions, and be able accurately to diſtinguiſh and ſolidly to determine concerning the *grace* of God, and yet in a Scripture-ſence know nothing of it, unleſs he taſte and ſee that the *Lord is gracious*. *Nicodemus* a *maſter in Iſrael*, yet ignorant of the work of *regeneration*, in reſpect of which an ordinary Chriſtian may know more then the greateſt Scholar. I have read of one *Didymus* a blinde man, whom for his incomparable learning S. *Jerome* was wont to call his *Seer*: many ſuch there are *blind* as to the *abſtruſe notions* of God; but *Seers* in reſpect of *experience*, which is the onely true *ſaving* knowledge of God.

2. *Practically* and *operatively*, as our knowledge influenceth upon our lives; to conform them to what we know: otherwiſe the Goſpel and God are but notions to us; and Scripture interprets it
Tit. 1. 16. as a *deniall* of God, *They profeſs they know God, but in works they deny him*. All our notions of God without this ſuitable practiſe can but
Rom. 2. 20. amount to a μόρφωσιν τῆς γνώσεως, *a form of knowledge*, not to any *ſa-*
John 13. 17. *ving* diſcovery: *If ye know theſe things happy are ye if ye do them*, not elſe: If knowledge would do it the Devils might be in heaven. The exprobratory ſentence will be at laſt, not *well read* or *diſputed, great Scholar:* but *well done thou good and faithfull ſervant*. *Seneca* ſpeaks of ſome Philoſophers of his days, *Boni eſſe deſierunt ſimul ac docti evaſerint*, who *ceaſed to be good when they began to be learned:* I ſhall charitably believe no ſuch will be found amongſt us, for I ſpeak
1 Cor. 4. 14. not *theſe things* (as S. Paul ſaith to his Corinthians) to *ſhame you, but as my beloved* Brethren and Friends, I *warn you* and exhort you

in

in the words of S. Peter, to *adde to your knowledge vertue*, that you may be ſuch as *Seneca* would have every teacher to be, *Magis miremur viſum quàm auditum*, ſuch as may be *admired* more for *holineſs of life*, then *ſubtilty of learning*, which God accounts no knowledge, if deſtitute of the ſtudy and practiſe of obedience, *Hereby know we that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that ſaith he knoweth him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a lyar, and the truth is not in him.* 2 Pet. 1.5. 1 Joh. 2.3,4

Eighthly and laſtly, I beſeech you, *Fathers and Brethren*, ſuffer the word of *exhortation*, which quickens you to zeal and diligence in the diſpenſation of the Goſpel committed to your truſt: that you may effect in your people by the preaching of the word, what the higheſt improvements of nature (as you have heard) cannot reach, to wit, a *ſaving* knowledge of God. God inſtituted the preaching of his word and Goſpel to ſupply the defect of *natural light*, the Apoſtle is expreſs, that when *in the wiſdome of God the world by wiſdome knew not God, it pleaſed God by the fooliſhneſs of preaching to ſave thoſe who believe.* God hath commiſſionated you on purpoſe, as he did *Paul*, to *open mens eyes, and turn them from darkneß to light.* The *Prieſts lips* muſt *preſerve knowledge*, that the *people may ſeek the law at his mouth.* 1 Cor. 1.21. Acts 26.18. Mal. 2.7.

In order to bringing the people to a *ſaving* knowledge, let me (who would willingly lie as Diſciple at your feet) being by providence in this place, take the boldneſs to give you a three-fold direction.

Firſt, *Endeavour to bring thoſe committed to your charge to a Scripture-knowledge of God.* Preach God not according to the abſtruſe Metaphyſical notions of *Plato* and *Ariſtotle*; all which *Clemens Alexandrinus* ſaith, are but like a *rotten nut*, ὃ τὸ πᾶν ἐδώδιμον, which hath no *kernel*, nothing to feed ſouls, which muſt have ἰδίας τροφάς, as the ſame Authour: but according to the revelation God hath made of himſelf in Scripture. Thus you ſhall approve your ſelves to God in the diſcharge of your office. Empty aiery ſpeculations may (perhaps) gratifie the humour, phanſie, and curioſitie of men; but Scripture-truths onely pleaſe and honour God. S. *Pauls* advice to *Timothy* is very remarkable, *Study to ſhew thy ſelf approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be aſhamed:* and the way to that is ὀρθοτομεῖν, *rightly to divide the word of truth.* 2 Tim. 2.15.

Secondly, *Preach a God in Chriſt.* The Heathen can arrive at the knowledge of a God abſtractly conſidered; but a God in Chriſt is beyond the reach of natural ſagacity, but is your Commiſſion to make known. *God*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation:* but what is that? why, *that God* 2 Cor. 5.19.

was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf. Lay this as the foundation of all your building, Chriſt in his *perſon*, and Chriſt in his offices: Chriſt in *oppoſition* to *nature*, in *contradiſtinction* to *merit* and your *own works* and *righteouſneſs*.

Thirdly, *Let all your other knowledge ſtoop to the diſcovering God ſavingly*: and ſo far as it is not conſiſtent with a plain and profitable diſcovery of God to the people, lay it aſide.

S. *Paul*, though brought up at the feet of *Gamaliel*, yet layd down his learning at the feet of Chriſt, and profeſſeth, that though
1 Cor. 14. 18, 19. he ſpake with *tongues more then they all, yet in the Church he had rather preach five words, that he might teach others, then ten thouſand words in an unknown tongue.* At *Athens* indeed, a famous *Univerſity*, he quoteth a Poet, Acts 17. *verſ.* 28: but when he comes to
1 Cor. 2. 2. his *Corinthians*, then he determines to *know nothing but Jeſus Chriſt and him crucified:* ἐν ὑμῖν ὐ ἔκρινα, *non magni feci*, is *Grotius* gloſs, *I valued* no knowledge but *diſeſteemed* it, that I might bring you to
Coloſſ. 2. 3. the *ſaving* knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, as *crucified.* Our Saviour who had in him all the *treaſures of wiſdome and knowledge*, yet condiſcended to the capacity of thoſe whom he inſtructed, ſpeaking
Mark. 4. 33. the word to them *as they were able to hear it.* In this Chriſt is a fit pattern for our imitation, to teach us by a familiar plainneſs to deſcend to the underſtandings of the people. *Quomodò paratus eſſet impendi pro animabus eorum, ſi eum pigeret inclinari ad aures eorum*, ſaith *Auguſtin*, in his book *De catechizandis rudibus.*

Rev. 2. 4. In a word, you are *ſtars* in the *right hand* of Chriſt, which ſpeaks both your ſecurity, and your duty; it is the office of *ſtars* to *ſhine* in the night with that light which they borrow from the *Sun*: ſo ſhould you, now we are in a great meaſure *benighted* in *Atheiſme*, and *ignorance*, *ſhine* with that light you have borrowed from the
Epheſ. 4. 8. *Sun of Righteouſneſs, who when he aſcended, gave theſe gifts: Apoſtles, Paſtours, Teachers, for the work of the miniſtery, the edifying of the body of Chriſt.*

There is another notion of the words, which I would willingly touch, *Tremellius*'s tranſlation of the *Syriack* hinted me to it; that is to ſay, *Deo abdito*, to whom the *Athenians* (underſtanding from their *Sybills*, Philoſophers, and others, that there was but one inviſible, incomprehenſible, ineffable God) erected this Altar, as *Spondanus* conjectures. God was known to the Gentiles by no name, and *that*, by which he was called amongſt the Jews, might not ordinarily be ſpoken, as *Grotius* notes. The name, *Jehovah*, had ſo much immoderate reverence amongſt the old Jews, that it might not be pronounced but by the *high Prieſt*, and that onely in the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, and onely on the Day of *expiation*, as

Gregory

Gregory in his *notes* obſerves. Others adde that it was uſed in their ſacrifices, and in the ſolemn benediction of the people. *Plato*, as quoted by *Euſebius* (lib. 1. cap. 8. *De Præpa. Evang.*) ſtiles God, ἄρρητον καὶ ἀνωνόμαστον.

Note:

God is a hidden and incomprehenſible God.

Hidden,

1. In his *nature* and *eſſence*, in which reſpect he is ſaid to *dwell in thick darkneſs*, and *in light inacceſſible*. 1 King 8.12. 1 Tim.6.16.

2. In his *counſels*, and *decrees*.

3. In his *ways* and *methods* of his providences. They are ἀνεξερεύνητα, *paſt finding out*, Rom. 11.33. a *mine* unfadomable. Theſe things might have been profitably enlarged. I begge your patience to a threefold improvement of this notion, and I conclude.

Firſt, As a *check to curioſitie*, the Scholars ſin, *fatalis ingeniorum ſcabies*, as *Lipſius* calls it. O that we could learn contentedly to be *ignorant* where God would not have us *knowing*! and let's not account it a diſparagement to acknowledge ſome *depths* in God, which our *ſhallow* Reaſon cannot *fathom*, Τὸ μὲν θέλειν εἰδέναι πάντα τὰ βάθη, ἐκ μικρὸν τῆς εἰδέναι τεκμήριον, ſaith *Chryſoſtome* on *Timothy*; and he that thinks to know God as *he is*, ὅτου μάλιστά ὄζιν ὁ τὸν Θεὸν ἀγνοῶν, ſaith the ſame *Father* on *John*. The way to make us meer fools, is to affect to know more then God would have us: *Adams* tree of knowledge made him and his poſteritie fools. He that affects to pry into the bodie of the Sun, by gazing grows ſtark blinde, and ſees leſs then he might by thoſe ſcattered rays in the air. So curioſitie in prying into Gods ſecrets blinds many, and they know leſs of him, then they might do by thoſe diſcoveries he hath made of himſelf in the book of nature and Scripture. *Næ intelligendo faciunt, ut nihil intelligant*, ſaith the *Comedian*. Pag. 598. Pag. 54.

It is the credit of our Religion, to acknowledge ſuch a God as is *unſearchable*. *Erubeſce, Philoſophe, tam parvum Deum habere, ut tu parvus per parvam mentem tuam totum ipſum ſcruteris*, as *Bradwardine* checks the prying Philoſophers.

God is moſt knowable, though we know leaſt of him: as the Sun is moſt *viſible*, and yet our weak eyes leaſt able to behold it, it is *Aquinas's* ſimilitude. *Non eſt mirum ſi ignoratis, majoris eſſet admirationis, ſi ſciatis*, ſaith *Arnobius*: and therefore it becomes us to be modeſt, and humble in our enquiries into God. The Apoſtle commands us, *Rom.* 12.3. *to think ſoberly*, *Sapere ad temperantiam*, as *Auguſtin* reads it. Curioſitie is a ſpiritual drunkenneſs, that, look, as the drunkard, be the cup never ſo deep, he is not ſatisfied, unleſs Lib. contr. Gentes. Epiſt. 77.

unleſs he ſee the botome of it: ſo the curious ſearcher into the depths of God, though never ſo profound, he is unſatisfied till he comes to the bottom of them: and where the Apoſtle ſtands as by the brink of the *Ocean*, and cryes, ὦ βάθος, theſe preſume they can by the line of their reaſon fathom them; nay, rather then not, they will make all Gods *depths* to be *ſhallows*, as the *Remonſtrants* do.

Me thinks (*Brethren*) our ignorance in the creatures, and being ſo far at a loſs as to flye to *occult qualities*, which *Scaliger* calls *ignorantiæ aſylum*, ſhould check our curioſitie in the things of God, and teach us to ſit down contented to reſolve Gods actions into ſome *hidden cauſes*, lying ſecret in the abyſs of eternal knowledge, and infallible will. The Heathen *Seneca* could ſay, *Nunquam verecundiores eſſe debemus, quàm cùm de Deo agitur: modeſtie never becomes us better, then when we ſpeak of God.* It was good counſel *Calvin* gave *Beza*, *Cave nè te ullis inanibus argutiis irretias*, I ſhall give the ſame, eſpecially to younger Students, *to avoid entangling with unneceſſarie niceties, which perplex, not profit*; ſuch are thouſands of *School-niceties* concerning God; *qui ut intelligatur tacendum eſt*, ſaith *Arnobius*; take the Engliſh from the Apoſtle, *become fools that ye may be wiſe.*

Secondly, As a *ſpur to induſtrie.* You muſt not think it an eaſie thing to obtain a true ſolid ſaving knowledge of God: nothing ſo hard to know as God, which the profound *Bradwardine* demonſtrates thus, *Si aliquid ſit difficile ad plenariè cognoſcendum, & aliquid magis difficile, & aliquid adhuc magis, & ità deinceps, aliquid eſt ſummè difficile: & quid niſi Deus?* The *Wiſeman* tells you by what means you muſt come to this knowledge, *If thou cryeſt after knowledge, and lifteſt up thy voice for underſtanding; if thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid treaſures: then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord, and finde the knowledge of God.*

Prov. 2. 3, 4, 5

Thirdly, As a *quickner of deſire*, to provoke us to long for heaven, where it it will be our happineſs to know God *perfectly*, though then we ſhall not know him *comprehenſively*: for God is *infinitæ veritatis, cognoſcibilitatis*, as *entitatis*; ſo muſt either lay aſide his *infinitie*, and ceaſe to be God, or elevate us above the condition of *finite* creatures, before we can be capable of any *comprehenſive* viſion, which ſuppoſeth an equal commenſuration between the *object*, and the *facultie*: but we ſhall know God ſo fully then as to make us perfectly happy, and what we ſee now but *in a glaſs darkly*, we ſhall then ſee *face to face. Ecce ſapientia quâ curioſitas hominis ſatietur!* ſaith *Bernard.* Then your curioſitie

rioſitie ſhall be wholly ſatisfied, and your underſtandings ſo ſtrengthned and elevated by the light, as to behold that God, which dazzles the weak eye of reaſon, which elevated to its height, cannot reach any *ſaving* knowledge of God: But ſtill he will be ΘΕΟΣ ΑΓΝΩΣΤΟΣ, the *hidden* and *unknown* God.

FINIS.

SPIRITUAL THRIFT,
OR
GOOD HUSBANDRY
FOR
THE SOUL.

A
Sermon preached in *Greys-Inne*-Chappel,
and enlarged in ſeveral *Common-Places* in
S^t. JOHN's Chappel in
CAMBRIDGE:

By JOHN FROST, *B. D.* late
Fellow there, and Preacher in
S. *Olaves-Hartſtreet* London.

Πολυτελέστατον ἀνάλωμα χρόνος. *Plutarch.*
Τοσοῦτόν ἐστι μὴ τῶ σώματι καὶ χρῆσθαι πάντα ποιεῖν. *Chryſoſtom.* in 1 Cor. Hom. 12.

CAMBRIDGE:
Printed by *John Field*, Printer to the Univerſitie.
Anno Dom. MDCLVII.

TO THE

HONOURABLE

THE LADY

ELISABETH TOLLEMACH,

Relict and Dowager of

Sir *LYONELL TOLLEMACH*,

Knight and Baronet, deceaſed,

All happineſs of this life, and that which is to come.

MADAM,

YOur eſteem of, and favour to the Authour of theſe Sermons, hath made me preſume to ſhroud them under your Patronage, as well to give ſome countenance to them, as to teſtifie my real Gratitude for your favours to me and mine. Such are your excellent Vertues and Endowments; your pietie to God, and devotion in his ſervice; your charitie to all, and bountie to the poor; your care and diligence in well-ordering, and good education of your Family; inſomuch as not onely *of* your Children, but *all* your Children, are found walking in the Truth: that I cannot think by theſe to adde any thing to your preſent

perfection. I offer them to you, as poor men bring presents to the rich: if they may carrie acceptance from you, and bring profit to any soul, it shall abundantly satisfie me. Two main duties of a Christian are the subject of them, *Redeeming the Time*, and *Profiting by the Word*, in both which you are exemplarie to others, and so the fittest Patroness for these Sermons: I therefore humbly betake them to your Protection, and you to the Protection of the Almightie: to whose Grace you, and yours, are daily commended in the weak prayers of,

MADAM,

Your most humbly devoted

servant, and unworthy

Minister,

JOHN FROST.

EPHES. 5. 16.

ΕΞΑΓΟΡΑΖΟΜΕΝΟΙ ΤΟΝ ΚΑΙΡΟΝ.

Redeeming the time.

How beautifull are the feet of them that preach the Goſpel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 10. 15. ὡς ὡραῖοι, the word ſignifies *ſeaſonable, opportune*, or *a word in its houre*, and ſuch indeed is *beautiful*, as *apples of gold in pictures of ſilver*, ſaith the *Wiſeman*, *Prov.* 25. 11. And ſuch will this appear to be, which I preſent you with at this time: whether we conſider our *times* in general, and take up the Apoſtles argument here, they are *evil* both in regard of *ſin* and *ſuffering*, of *errour* and *profaneneſs*, or the *place* we live in, we ſhall eaſily conclude, none to be more engaged in this duty, then our ſelves (of this more in the progreſs of this diſcourſe); or laſtly, if we conſider that *miſpence* of time, which (I ſpeak it to your ſhame, and am ſorry that I have this occaſion of ſpeaking to the words) to the diſhonour of God, ſcandal to theſe places of education, ſo ſhamefully abounds amongſt us: ſo that we may complain of many among us now, as *Seneca* did, *Pleriſq; ſimul ad temporis jacturam ventum eſt, profuſiſſimi in eo, cujus ſolius honeſta eſt avaritia.* Time is the onely thing we can innocently be covetous of, & yet there is nothing of which many are more laviſhly and profuſely prodigal. *Re omnium pretioſiſſimâ luditur*, we trifle with that which is moſt precious, and throw away that which is our greateſt intereſt to *redeem*, ἐξαγοραζόμενοι τὸν καιρόν.

De brevitate vitæ.

The Text is a leſſon of *ſpiritual thrift*, and *good husbandry*, and reſolves it ſelf into this plain Doctrine,

Doctrine.

It is the concernment and duty of every one to be conſcientious in redeeming his time.

In proſecution of which four things preſent themſelves to our diſcourſe.

Firſt, what it is to redeem the time.

Secondly, why we are to be conſcientious in this.

Thirdly, who are eſpecially concerned in it.

Fourthly, the Improvement and Application.

Firſt, what it is to redeem the time. In the explication of it, I ſhall lead you no further then the expreſſion in the Text, ἐξαγοραζό-

μενοι;

ὦμοι: which is a *Metaphor* taken from Merchants, and ſo take the importance of our dutie in theſe eight particulars.

Firſt, It ſpeaks an *act of wiſdome in embracing the preſent opportunity*, as oppoſed to that dangerous folly, by which many befool, delude, and ruine themſelves, *viz.* by reſting upon fond preſumption of future times, as if they had it at command. *Utuntur illo laxiùs*, ſaith *Seneca, quaſi gratuitò*, as if it were at their beck, and diſpoſal, who miſpend their preſent day of grace, and put off the weighty concernment of their ſalvation, of their trading for ſpiritual merchandize, till the day be ſpent, and the mart over; this is not ἐξαγοράζειν. A Merchant when he comes to a mart or fair, he takes his firſt ſeaſon and opportunity of purchaſing his commodities, puts it not off to the hazard of an evening, or the next dayes bargain, upon preſumption then to have it cheaper, leſt the commodities be gone in the mean ſeaſon. In this, *the children of this world are wiſer in their generations*, then we who pretend to be *children of light*. How do moſt neglect the preſent time God puts into their hands? play, idle, nay, ſin away their market-day, upon that preſumption to have grace and glory at a very cheap and eaſie rate, when they come to die? reſolve, perhaps, ſometime hereafter to trade for ſuch merchandiſe which are ſpiritual, and while they are reckoning, the evening of death overtakes them, and the mart breaks up, and ſo they are miſerably diſappointed. Like the *fooliſh virgins*, who had their *oyl* to get, when the *Bridegroom* came, *Matth.* 25. 8. then they would have been *buying*, but then the *trading* was over, the *Exchange* ſhut up. He was a wiſe Merchant indeed, whom we read of *Matth.* 13.44. who without delay preſently went and bought the field in which the treaſure was hid. Ὑπάγει, πωλεῖ, ἀγοράζει, all in the *preſent tenſe*. This piece of *wiſdome-ſpirituall* the Scripture every where urgeth upon us, as *Hebr.* 3. 15. *To day if ye will hear his voice*: and, *Now is the accepted time*, 2 *Cor.* 6. 2. and ſo our Saviour, *Joh.* 12. 33. *Walk while you have the light*: Our Saviour himſelf indeed ſet us a copy and pattern of this in his own example: *Joh.* 9. 4. *I muſt work the works of him that ſent me, while it is day*. This language becomes every one of us, we muſt work while we have the day of grace: *the night* of death *cometh, in which none can work*. Let us get our work done while our day laſts, the *preſent* time is onely ours; *Pòſt eſt occaſio calva*, no faſtning or taking hold of it: we can no more ſecure our ſelves the *future*, then recall *paſt* time: therefore it is an act of the higheſt wiſdome to embrace the *preſent*; the want of which our Saviour lamented in Jeruſalem, *Oh that thou hadſt known in this thy day! Luke* 19.41. This is onely *thine*, the next is *Gods* day: This is our *day* of *grace*, the next

next may be the *day* of *Gods vengeance*. The old world had a *long day*, while *Noah*, *the preacher of righteousneſs*, warned them; the next was Gods *day of vengeance*, then he brought the floud upon them. Let us then be ſo wiſe, as to uſe that which onely is ours. *Non tantùm eſt præſentis, ſed vigilantis eſt obſervare occaſionem properantem*, ſaith *Seneca*. Let us be ſo wiſe as to traffick for heavenly merchandiſe while our market-day laſts, and ſo to *redeem the time:* that is the firſt particular.

Secondly, An act of *diligence and faithfulneſs* to improve the time God allots us, as oppoſed to *ſloth and idleneſs*. Time is a *talent*, and God expects *improvement* of it, and God will charge the *non-improvement* of it upon us, as he did upon *Jezabel*, Rev. 2. 21. A Merchant is diligent in improving his time for the enriching himſelf; you ſhall not finde him ſlothfully idle: ſo ſhould we, who are trading for heaven, for ſpiritual wiſdome, be as much in ſeeking, laborious in ſtriving; you cannot have them upon eaſier terms: *Prov.* 2. 3, 4. there muſt be *getting*, and *ſeeking*, and *ſearching*. *Why ſtand ye here all the day idle?* ſaith Chriſt, *Matth.* 20. 6. *aſleep*, ſaith *Calvin*. But can we plead, *Not guilty?* Have not we ſtood here many a day idle? and miſpent much of that time which God gives us to *repent*, and *pray* in? Surely, this is not to *redeem the time*, but, as *Zanchy* obſerves, *non permittere ut tempus otio elabatur infructuoſè*. *Idleneſs* is the very *buriall* of a *living* man, ἐσμὲν ἐνεργεῖς ſaith the Philoſopher, *lib.* 9. *cap.* 7. *Ethic.* *Seneca* ſpeaking of a moſt idle perſon, deſcribes him as one who had *been* long, but not *lived* long, *diu fuit, non diu vixit*. Like the ſtatues of *Dædalus*, which they tell us ſeemed to have *ſouls*, but were *inanimate:* ſuch *ſpectrums* an obſervant eye may take notice of daily, which lodge in and about the *Colledge*, as if they had not ſouls to improve with knowledge and learning. That is excellent advice of the *Wiſeman*, Eccles. 9. 10. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might:* for *Curſed is he who does the work of the Lord negligently*, Jer. 48. 10. It is an act of *diligence*, that's the ſecond particular.

Ariſt. Ethic. lib. 9. *cap.* 7.

Thirdly, An act of *diſcretion* in *laying out* our *time* in our *proper callings*, as oppoſed to thoſe ἀλλότριοι ὀπίσκοποι in 1 *Pet.* 4. 15. It is poſſible for a man to ſtudy hard, and take a great deal of pains to looſe his time, and to be laboriouſly idle, when he layes not out his time in reference to that particular calling he is deſigned for. A Merchant we know regards not the traffick of other men, but layes out his time and skill for that merchandize which belongs to his particular trade: ſo ſhould we in the improvement of our time, look eſpecially to that concernment of our particular callings. A man may miſpend his time as much *aliud agendo*, as *nihil agendo*, doing

that which *nothing concerns him*, as by *doing nothing at all*. Such are thoſe *Dictatores ab aratro*, who leap from the *plough* or *ſhop-board* into the *pulpit:* they may ſeem to be *zealous redeemers* of their *time*; but indeed miſpend it as unhappily in placing their endeavours upon that, which God never deſigned them unto: therefore the Apoſtle oft reſtrains our diligence to our particular callings. Rom. 12. 6, 7, 8. *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether propheſie, let us propheſie according to the proportion of faith: or miniſtery: let us wait on our miniſtring, or he that teacheth on teaching: or he that exhorteth on exhortation, &c.* And ſo we may ſee how ſpecially he inſtructs *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 4. 13. *Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine:* and verſ. 15. *meditate on theſe things, give thy ſelf wholly to them:* fit employment indeed for a *Timothy*, ſuitable to the ſpecial office of the miniſtery. And in 1 *Cor.* 7. 20. he layes down a general direction for all: *Let every man abide in the ſame calling, wherein he is called*, and in that improve, and redeem his time. *Domitian* was very induſtrious, but in that unbeſeemed his eſtate & employment: viz. in *catching flies*. *Nero* loſt his time, when he ſtudied and affected more the commendation of a *skilfull fidler* then a *good Emperour*. Our imployments ſhould bee fitted to our callings, and if ſo, diligence in the meaneſt calling is acceptable ſervice unto God: but if otherwiſe, the greateſt labour is but loſt time. Thus for a Miniſter to be immerſed in worldly employments is miſpence of his time, becauſe a παίεργον as to his main end and deſign of his office. Chriſt will endure no *buyers* and *ſellers* in the *Temple*. That diligence, which is commendable in one, may be loſs of time in another: thus *Romances, plays*, and ſuch like are miſpence of time in one, whoſe deſign is the handling of the *ſacred oracles*: the *plea* for them is that they *elevate* the *phanſy*, the truth is, rather they *effeminate* the *minde*, that ſhould in the mean time be exerciſed in deepeſt ſpeculations.

Fourthly, An act of *labour* and *ſollicitude* in regaining time formerly miſpent: that is, by doubling their diligence for the future. Time let ſlip is *Phyſically* irrecoverable, but in a *moral* conſideration is accounted as regained, when we double our endeavours and care. As a Merchant, who hath had great loſs, doubles his labour in his future traffique: ſo ſhould we who have miſpent our time (and which of us hath not too much?) now redeem it, by a more zealous and conſcientious improvement of it. Thus we may at once teſtifie the ſincerity of our ſorrow for our former miſpence, and in ſome meaſure repair the diſhonour we have thereby done to God. Thus S. *Paul*, who had wickedly laid out his time in blaſpheming and perſecuting the Church, afterward redeemed it, by *labouring*

more

more abundantly then all the reſt of the Apoſtles, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10.

Fifthly, It ſpeaks an act of *prudence*, in chooſing and embracing the fitteſt opportunities and ſeaſons for all our actions, and this is the proper import of the word καιρὸς, *ſeaſon*. To this the Apoſtle directs *Galat.* 6. 10. καιρὸν ἔχομεν. A Merchant watcheth the fitteſt opportunity for his trade and purchaſe: ſo ſhould Chriſtians chooſe the fitteſt ſeaſon for all their actions, wherein they moſt promote Gods glory, their own and others good. All actions of Religion are not ſeaſonable at all times: the *Wiſe-man* obſerves, *To every thing there is a ſeaſon*, Eccleſ. 3. 1. as to inſtance. *Fraternal correption*, a duty, in which, if duly exerciſed, the good of Chriſtians is much concerned, yet not ſeaſonable at many times; as to reproove a ſcorner in the height of his ſcorning; or a drunkard in the heat of his cups. When the poor begs, there is thy opportunity of charity, or when their cauſe is repreſented to thee. When thou art wronged, then is thy ſeaſon to demonſtrate thy patience and mercy in forgiving. When thou ſeeſt a *Samaritane* lie wounded, then is the opportunity of thy pouring in wine and oyl: and, when thy brother falleth into ſin, there is the opportunity for exerciſing thy brotherly help to *reſtore* him *in the ſpirit of meekneſs*, Galat. 6. 1. Some actions may be ſeaſonable at all times, ſo for *prayer* every time may be ſeaſonable enough, ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ *Epheſ.* 6. 18. ſo *Rom.* 12. 11. where ſome read τῷ κυρίῳ, others καιρῷ διδασκάλου: whence *Bellarmine* would prove the text to be corrupted; but I think good uſe may be made of both; as the perceiving the fitteſt ſeaſon for thoſe other actions. And ſo ſome actions of Religion are more ſeaſonable at ſome times, then at others: as

1. The *morning* of every day for *devotion*: *Aurora Muſis*; yea, and for the *Graces* too: ſo *David* eſteemed of it, *Pſal.* 88. 13. *In the morning ſhall my prayer prevent thee*: ſo the *primitive* Chriſtians judged it the fitteſt ſeaſon, as *Pliny*, no friend to them hath it, They were wont, ſaith he, *Stato die ante lucem convenire, & ſe Sacramento obſtringere, nè furta, nè latrocinia, nè adulteria committerent.* And the morning indeed is the fitteſt ſeaſon for all religious exerciſes: of which one of the Ancients gives this reaſon, becauſe then the τὸ ἡγεμόνικον is not diſturbed with thoſe images and repreſentations of things, which the varietie of wordly imployments in the day-time uſually poſſeſs us with. This you may obſerve to have been *Job's* practiſe, *Job* 1. 5. He *roſe up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings.* And ſo we read of the Apoſtles, that *they went early into the temple*, Acts 5. 21. So early ſhould we be in our actions of *devotion*.

Plin Epiſt. lib. 10. ep. 67.

2. The *Sabbath* of every week. That ſhould eſpecially be *re-*

deemed, even from thoſe employments, which we may lawfully entertain upon other daies: this is, as I may ſo ſay, the *market-day* for ſouls; in which you may eſpecially trade for ſpiritual Merchandize, and yet how ſinfully laviſh are many amongſt us of this day, that many amongſt us ſleep away the greateſt part of the market! what elſe means the abſence of ſo many, eſpecially on *Sabbath*-day mornings, from theſe publick exerciſes: the Chappel being thinner then, then at other times? And yet there is a Divine ſtamp and impreſſion upon this day; and that it be carefully obſerved by us, all the equitie in the world calls for it, God having indulged us the reſt of the week for our ſelves and callings; and ſo we ſee the Apoſtles care was to *redeem* it wholly to *holy* exerciſes; *upon the firſt day of the week, the diſciples came together, for breaking of bread, and preaching*, &c. Acts 20.7.

Sixthly, An act of *expence* and charge, when we are willing to be at coſt for the *redeeming* of our time, and to part with ſomething that we may *improve* it. As Merchants are at charge for their merchandize, they are oft laying out their treaſure, have many a troubleſome voyage and reſtleſs nights, for the ſecuring and bringing in of their merchandizes: ſo ſhould Chriſtians ſpare ſome of their lawfull pleaſures and recreations of their natural reſt and ſleep, that they may *redeem* and *improve* their *time*; which is not onely *non abuti occaſione, ſed etiam mille voluptatibus redimere*, as *Beza* gloſſeth. Merchants prefer the leaſt gain before the fulleſt pleaſure: he adventures all his riches; the Merchant in the parable *parted with all, ſold it for the field*, Matt. 13. It is ſaid of our bleſſed Saviour, *Galat.* 3. 13. χεισὸς ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασεν, (the ſame word that is in our Text). How ſo? He parted with all, pleaſure, profit, life and all, for the accompliſhment of this end: ſo ſhould we in an ingenuous return of gratitude, part with our pleaſures and all, that we may conſecrate our time to his ſervice. Not, but we may lawfully uſe pleaſures and recreations, ſo they be not vain, and ſuch as do rather enervate, then refreſh the minde, or too much expenſive of that time we ſhould redeem to Gods glorie, and the intereſt and concernments of our own ſouls. It was the cuſtome of the *Primitive* Chriſtians to *redeem* ſome *time* from their ſleep for the ſervice of God, which did ἀγγελικὴν ἐξισάζειν χάριν, as *Clement* obſerves, exalt them to an Angelical perfection; which lies in a watchful, cõſtant *obſervance*, yea, and *expence* of their *time*, or *eternity* rather, in the ſervice of God. And I read in *Nicephorus* of *Theodoſius* the Emperour, that *after the variety of worldly employments*, relating to his civil affairs in the day-time, *he was wont to conſecrate the greateſt part of the night to the ſtudying of the Scriptures*: to which end, heh ad a lamp

Clemens.

lamp ſo artificially made, that it ſupplied it ſelf with oyl, that he might no way be interrupted in dedicating that *time* to God.

Seventhly, An act of *watchfulneſs* in avoiding what may betray us to the *miſpence* of *time*: ſuch are eſpecially *frothy* and *idle diſcourſes*, and *bad* and *looſe company*. A Merchant will not engage himſelf in *impertinent diſcourſe*, or *voluptuous companie*, when he ſhould be driving on his *trade*. Theſe every man muſt avoid, that would *redeem* his *time*; for *bad companie* draws into ſin and idleneſs: upon this account God forbad the *nations* to dwell with the Jews, *Exod.*23.33. therefore *David* would have no *commerce* with ſuch, *Pſal.*119.115. as if he could not ſpend his time in the ſervice of God, while ſuch were in his companie. *Idle company* is the *ſhame* of *Societies*, the *bane* of *pietie*, the *corruption* of *youth*, the *quencher* of *devotion*, the *laviſher* of *time*. He that deſires to be *provident* of his *time*, muſt be prudent in the choiſe of his *Societie*, otherwiſe, in *bad company*, he may quickly throw away time, and himſelf, ſoul, eternitie and all.

Eighthly, An act of *deliberate* and *reſolved* judgement, to *lay out* our *time* for the *beſt things*. As a Merchant will not expend his time and money for *toyes* and *trifles*, but for *pearls*, and the like. *Curioſè merces conſiderat ut emat meliores*, ſaith *A Lapide* on the Text; *examines his wares, that he may purchaſe the beſt*: ſo ſhould Chriſtians in laying out their time, not lay it out for trifles of the world, but for the greateſt things of eternitie: not with *Martha* for the *many things*, but with *Mary* for the *one thing neceſſarie*. The Merchant in the Goſpel indeed *ſold all*, but it was to purchaſe the *pearl*: and S. *Paul* counted all *loſs*, but it was to *gain* Chriſt, *Philip.*3.8. Thoſe who ſpend their time for the vanities of the world, for the light air of popular applauſe, for the ſhadow of honour, riches, or the like (not to mention the debaſing of their ſouls, which are born to greater hopes and deſigns): they throw away their time, and often their ſouls, in ſuch bargains: to whom let me ſay with the Propher *Eſay*, 55.2. *Wherefore do you ſpend your money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which ſatisfieth not?* We are here at *Athens*, that *Emporium ſcientiarum*, trafficking for wiſdome and knowledge; but let me ſuggeſt this, We do but throw away our times, though laborioufly ordered to this end, if in the mean time we are careleſs of ſpiritual wiſdome: *Thoſe merchandizes are better then the merchandizes of ſilver, and her gain then of fine gold*, Prov. 3.14. In reſpect of which, our trading here for all other knowledge, is but mere downright *pedlery*. We may miſpend our time in our ſtudies, if ſo addicted to them, as to neglect our devotions, and other ſtudies to God. *Melchior Adam* tells us of *Luther*, that

*Melch. Adam in vit. Lutheri pag.*142.

every day he ſpent three hours in prayer, *etiam ſtudiis aptiſſimas*, even thoſe that were fitteſt for his ſtudies: and it was his uſual ſaying, *Bene orâſſe eſt bene ſtudiſſe*: *to pray well*, with him, *was to ſtudie well*. Prayer is as oyl to the *lamp*, makes it burn clearly, and laſtingly. So again, if our ſollicitude for other knowledge makes us neglect, and regardleſs of our knowledge of Chriſt. S. *Paul* gat much knowledge at the feet of *Gamaliel*, but when he came to underſtand himſelf, he counted it all *droſs* for the knowledge of Chriſt, *Philip.* 3.8. If we would be wiſe Merchants, we muſt trade for heaven and eternitie, and lay up our treaſure there, and amidſt our heats, and purſuits of other knowledge, lay out our time and prayers eſpecially for the knowledge of Chriſt, *whom onely to know is life eternal*, John 17.3. And that is the firſt General.

2. *General.*

Secondly, Why we are to be conſcientious in this.

Firſt, It is the verie *end* of thy *creation*: and that,

1. As a *creature*: God did not create, and ſet us in the world, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſaies of the *Leviathan*, to *take our paſtime*, to be *ſlothfull* and *idle*, but to *be in action* and *employment*. God created *all things for man*, and *man for himſelf*, therefore ought to be in continual motion, and tendencie towards God. As all things naturally tend to their end, as their reſt and perfection: ſo ſhould man to God, as his happineſs and reſt. Idleneſs is a contradiction to the *principles* of our creation. Man in innocencie ſhould have been freed from *wearineſs*, but not from *employment*: he was to *dreſs* the *garden*, and that by Gods appointment: *And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dreſs it, and to keep it*, *Gen.* 2.15. *Cui ſumma cum voluptate vacaret*, ſaies *Auguſtin.* Vexing and tormenting labour, was indeed the puniſhment of ſin, *In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread*, *Gen.* 3.19. Therefore as a *creature*, *redeem thy time*.

Auguſtin. de Gen. ad. lit. lib. 8. cap. 8.

2. As the *moſt noble creature*. God at firſt did not create any one thing uſeleſs: you cannot caſt your eyes any way, but every creature checks, and upbraids your idleneſs and ſloth: and I hope this will not ſeem an impertinent argument, to put you upon *improvement* of your time. *Solomon* ſends the *ſluggard* to the *Ant* to learn induſtrie, *Prov.* 6.6. If you look up to the *heavens*, you ſee them in a *continual motion*, and the Sun *running* his courſe to ſupply you with light, and that not as children to play in the *Sun-ſhine*, but that the *Sun ariſing*, *man may go forth unto his labour*. If you caſt your eyes down to the *earth*, you ſhall ſee it travelling with fruits, and graſs, and herbs for your uſe; and we may well go to ſchool to theſe to learn labour and induſtrie. Our Saviour ſends us to the *Sparrows*, and *Lillies* to learn attendance upon *Providence*: the Prophet

Pſal. 104. 23.

Matt. 6, 26, 28.

phet ſends the Jews to the *Stork* and the *Aſs* to learn *obedience* unto, and waiting upon God, *Jerem.*8.7. *Eſay* 1.3. and I may ſend you to every creature to learn this leſſon of an *induſtrious redeeming* of your time. Chriſt judgeth the *figge-tree* but an *unprofitable burthen* to the earth, when it brought forth no fruit, *Luke* 13.7. Now man is the *moſt noble creature*, into whom God hath put principles of the greateſt activitie, as capable of the greateſt enjoyments, ſo fitted with faculties, and principles to move towards them: therefore *idleneſs* is a *forgetting* mans *dignitie*, forſaking the rank God hath ſet him in, and *debaſing* himſelf below the meaneſt creatures, who conſtantly in their order, and obedientially *ſerve the law of their creation*. Nay, look to the creatures above you, the *Angels*, they are in conſtant employment, as *miniſtring ſpirits* for your good, *Heb.* 1. *ult.* and theſe may teach you *diligence* in, and *improvement* of your *time*.

3. Conſider, Chriſt ſpent all his time in the world for thee: from his birth (*To us a childe is born*, Iſaiah 9.6.) to his death, he died *for our offences*, Rom. 4.25. His ſoul was in a *continual travel* to ſave thee: and ſhall not this engage thee? Chriſts life was a continual labour to redeem *thee*; and ſhall not this ingage thee to redeem *thy time*, and expend thy life in his ſervice? In this he was a *pattern*, and example for our imitation. The Apoſtle judgeth this to be the moſt reaſonable thing in the world, 2 *Cor.*5. 14. *For the love of Chriſt conſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judge: that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all, that they which live, ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him which died for them.* So that miſpence of our time is not onely unanſwerable to our *creation*, but unworthy, and unſuitable to the work of our *redemption*. For he *gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works*, Tit. 2. 14. The time thou enjoyeſt, is the purchaſe of Chriſts bloud, and he bought it not for thee, to laviſh out on thy luſts, or to throw it away idlely: no, the Apoſtle tells you of another end, 1 *Cor.*6.20. *Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God both in your bodies and ſpirits*, &c.

4. Conſider, that the *Devil* is very *laborious* and *induſtrious* in *ſpending* all his time to deſtroy thee. He looſeth not a minute of day or night, that he may compaſs this end: 1 *Pet.*5.8. *Your adverſarie the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, ſeeking whom he may devour*. Oh that we could learn this leſſon from Satan himſelf, to be as induſtrious in laying out our time in *working out our ſalvation*, as he is in *plotting our damnation*! The Apoſtle would have us to learn this from it, γρηγορήσατε, *Be vigilant*; and ſo we had need, if we

we conſider, that nothing gives the devil ſo much advantage of us, as idleneſs. It was good counſel, that *Ierome* gave to his friend, *Facito aliquid operis, ut te ſemper diabolus inveniat occupatum*; that when the devil comes with a temptation, you may answer him, *you are not at leiſure.* The devils temptations, which ruſh in upon us with an irreſiſtable violence, cannot without repeated and frequent ſollicitations get entrance into the ſoul, if it be well employed. The fowler bends his bow, and ſpreads his net for birds, when they are ſet, not when they are upon the wing: ſo Satan ſhoots his fierie darts at men, when they are idle and remiſs; it will not pierce the ſoul when it is *upon the wing* in *devotion*, or *induſtriouſly employed* in any *lawfull calling*. S. *Chryſoſtome* mentions two originals of mens ruine; ἀργίαν καὶ ῥᾳθυμίαν, *idleneſs*, and *remiſsnes*.

Hierom. ep. 4.

5. Conſider, that *idleneſs* and *miſimprovement* of our time betraies us to the vvorſt of ſins (and this followvs upon the former) becauſe it diſpoſes the ſoul to the entertainment of every temptation. *Otium diaboli pulvinar*; *Idleneſs is the devils cuſhion*, upon vvhich Satan ſits, and *broods* his temptations. Hovv vvas *Davids* ſoul, as *tinder* to the *ſpark* of luſt, vvhich Satan injected and threvv into it? The glance of *Bathſheba* ſo fired his heart, that it brake into a flame of luſt: vvhat vvas the reaſon of this? He vvas *idlely walking*, 2 Sam. 11. 2. The Heathens in their *Hierogylphicks* deſcribe *Cupid* lifting up a hand and a torch, and *idleneſs* managing the hand, and ordering the ſtroke to the heart, vvhereby the heart is inflamed vvith luſt. *Iſiodore* calls idleneſs, ὁρμητήριον πᾶσῶν παθῶν, *the garriſon and fort of the paſsions*, vvhich are all unruly and diſorderly: It is *promptuarium ſcelerum, apotheca vitiorum*, as another: no ſin comes amiſs to him; he is plotting himſelf, and as ready to comply with other mens contrivements of ſin, as being at a loſs how to ſpend his time. With how eaſie a temptation, was *Peter* brought to denie his Maſter? the chief reaſon queſtionleſs was puſillanimous fear of ſuffering, but his idleneſs might contribute much to it; he was *ſitting idle* in the High-Prieſts palace, *Matt.* 26. 69. God preſcribed labour to man, not onely as a *puniſhment*, but as a *cure*, and prevention of ſin: *ut laborando recuperet, quod otioſus comedendo perdidit*, ſaith *Stella*. He was ſet to *dreſs the garden*, and he would *idlely entertain* a diſcourſe with the devil. So *pride*, that's another product of *idleneſs*: when men have little to do, they can finde time to invent fooliſh and ridiculous faſhions, onely to cheriſh *pride* and vanitie: and others ſpending their time on the Lords-day, between the comb and the glaſs, which ſhould be employed in *preparatorie* acts of devotion, to be conſecrated unto God, as introductions to the *publick*-ſervice: you may finde this was the cauſe of

Iſid. Lib. 1. *ep.* 9.

Stella in Luc. 10.

Sodom's

Sodomes pride, *Ezek.* 16.49. *abundance of idleneſs was in her.* Thus you ſee by Scripture-inſtancies, that *Luſt*, *Apoſtacie*, and *Pride* are the ſad iſſues of an idle miſimprovement of time: when men are not faithfully employed, the devil will employ them, (the ſoul of man is ſo active, that it cannot be idle, and, if not ſet on work, the devil will be ſure to finde work for them) and they are in as readie a poſture of obedience, as the Centurions ſervants: there is no preſerving the health of the bodie without exerciſe, and theſe diſeaſes will grow upon the ſoul too faſt, if not prevented by a diligent *improvement*, and *redeeming of our time.*

6. Conſider, *Time* is a *talent*, and therefore God expects an *improvement* of it. Our time is not at our own diſpoſe to be laviſhed out in purſuance of our own luſts and deſigns, but a *talent* to be improved for our Maſters glorie. And as he expected ſuitable *improvement* according to the number of *talents*, delivered to his ſervants, *Matt*, 25.15. according as one, or more: ſo as God gives us the longer time, the more years, he expects our improvement of it: every day is a *talent* of *time* put into our hands, and therefore he expects we ſhould every day improve it. Nay.

7. Conſider, *Time* is ſuch a *talent*, upon the faithful improvement of which, *depends* the *improvement* of all our other *talents*, God intruſts us with, whether *gifts* or *graces*. *Action*, as it begets, ſo it increaſes, ſtrengthens, and ſecures the *habits* which are loſt and weakned, not onely by contrarie actions, but by remiſſion of their proper *act*: *gifts* decay and wither, *grace* grows dull, and gradually decays, if not acted and improved. The *talent* laid up in the *napkin* you know did not increaſe, no more then if it had been laviſhly ſpent. How many by idleneſs have ſuffered their *parts* and *gifts* to ruſt, and by Gods judicial proceeding, have loſt them fearfully! So unexerciſed *grace* is, as comfortleſs, ſo withering & decaying. The *ſword*, that is kept bright by uſing, ruſts in the ſcabbard; and *waters*, which keep ſweet and clean by motion, contract filth, and ſtinch by ſtanding; air without motion corrupts, and grows peſtilential; flames not in motion periſh: ſo do mens *gifts* ruſt, and even come to nothing, if not exerciſed. The *ſouldiours valour* decays, and is impaired in the garriſon, but is increaſed and quickned in the field and battel. Idleneſs and remiſsneſs enervate the vertues of the ſoul, but they are ſtrengthned by improvement. As therefore S. *Paul* exhorts *Timothy*, ἀναζωπυρεῖν, *to ſtir up the gift of God that was in him*; to *keep it alive*, as *fire*, and that by conſtant blowing: ſhould we preſerve our *gifts* and *graces* by *redeeming* of our time: eſpecially,

8. Conſidering, that *time* is ſuch a *talent*, as God will certain-

ly call to *account* for. The Apoſtle urgeth an holy improvement of time upon this account. 1 *Pet.* 42,5. theſe two verſes compared together; one thing God will account for at the great day, will be our *Time*. Oh! how ſad will it be for many gray-heads to appear at that day, as old in ſin as years, to anſwer for the expence of three or fourſcore years, which perhaps they have uſeleſsly ſpent in vanitie and ſin? Then God will beſpeak men thus: *Come give me an account of that time, which I gave thee to glorifie me, and to work out thine own ſalvation in, and thou haſt been ſpending it in purſuance of the luſts of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life.* What a ſad charge will this be at that day to thouſands in the world? Oh that we had hearts to conſider it, before it be too late, while time laſts, before eternitie overtake us! what account ſhall they give of their time, who laviſh it out in idle ſports and paſtimes, in pride, exceſs, and vanitie? as that King of *Perſia*, of whom *Ælian* tells us, who promiſed a large reward to any, who would invent any new ſports and recreations. *Var. hiſt. lib. 1.* See how the Wiſe-man checks young men, (who commonly are moſt profuſe, and careleſs of their time) in the midſt of their jollitie with ſuggeſting this account unto them. *Rejoyce, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the daies of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine own heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes, but know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into judgement*, Eccleſ. 11.9. he ſpeaks by an *Ironical* conceſſion, *Go on, ſpend your time in vanitie, but after you have done ſo, know for certain you muſt come to judgement.*

9. Conſider, it is a *day* of *grace*, and the time of *patience*, which God now affords thee. Now the door of mercie ſtands open, therefore we ſhould not, with the *fooliſh virgins*, ſleep away this time, leſt the door be ſhut againſt us, as it was againſt them, *Matt.* 25.10. So as *Eſau*, who loſt the bleſſing, becauſe he came to late: this is the time of our reprieve allotted unto us, in which to ſue out our pardon: *Account that the long-ſuffering of the Lord is ſalvation*, 2 Pet. 3.15. *Plutarch* calls it χρόνον πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν, καὶ μεταβάλλεσθαι χρόνον, and that it is, ἰατρείας ἕνεκα: and much more to the ſame purpoſe may be found in that excellent piece *of the ſlothfulneſs of the gods in puniſhing ſinners*. The Scripture ſpeaks the ſame, *Rom.* 4.2. *the goodneſs of God ſhould lead thee to repentance*: and *Revel.* 2.21. χρόνον ἵνα μετανοήσῃ, *time, that ſhe might repent.* He now ſtands at the door and knocks; he gives us a *day* of *grace*, and it will be our intereſt to *redeem* it to thoſe ends, for which he affords it. *Time* is *illud unum; quod nè gratus quidem poteſt reddere*, ſaies the Heathen *Seneca*. *Senec. ep. 1.*

10. Conſider, It will be your wiſdome to *redeem* it: *Epheſ.* 5.15.

ως

ὡς σοφοί. It is deſperate folly and madneſs for a condemned *malefactour* to triſle away the time of his reprieve, as arguing a ſlighting of the Princes favour in allowing it to him: or for a *Merchant* to idle away the time of his *trade:* we are here upon our reprieve; it doth ſpeak our unſenſibleneſs of, and unthankfulneſs for this mercie of God, if we fooliſhly laviſh it out, and not improve it to get our pardon, and peace made and ſecured. It is the time of our trading, let us not be ſuch fools as *Solomon* ſpeaks of, *Prov.* 17. 16. as *having a price in our hand, and have no hearts to uſe it.* Our Saviour makes it a Character of a wiſe man, that *he got his houſe built upon a rock, before the floods came, and the winds blew,* Matt. 7. 24, 25. it will be our wiſdome to get our ſelves built upon the *rock*, Jeſus Chriſt, by faith; to lay out our time in *making our calling and election ſure*, Philip. 2. 10. It is your wiſdome, eſpecially if you,

11. Conſider, This *day* of *grace* will not alwaies laſt. The time will come, if we now neglect them, that the *things that belong to our everlaſting peace will be hid from our eyes,* Luke 19. 41. Jeruſalem's *day* had a *night*, and then ſhe was left in *darkneſs*, who had formerly ſlighted the *light*: you may ſee the length of your time, *Pſal.* 90. 10. *It is ſoon cut off, and we flee away*; this muſt have a period. The Apoſtle tells us, that *the long-ſuffering of God waited in the dayes of Noah*, 1 Pet. 3. 20. yet that day ended in a deluge. If the figge-tree was ſpared three years, yet afterward it was cut up.

12. Conſider, Thou knoweſt not how ſoon thy *time* may *end*, thy *day* be *ſpent*; perhaps when thou leaſt expecteſt it. The night may overtake thee, before thou thinkeſt thy day half-ſpent, and thereupon art remiſs and ſecure, as promiſing thy ſelf a longer day: the bridegroom came at *midnight, while the fooliſh virgins ſlept*, Mat. 25. The *laſt day* ſhall come upon many unawares, and eſpecially you know upon whom, and it is upon ſuch, as miſpend their time in *ſurfetting*, and *drunkenneſs*, and *the cares of this life*, Luke 21. 34. How ſoon a period may be put to any of our daies, he onely knows, in whoſe *hands* our *times are*, Pſal. 31. 15. therefore it is our concernment to *redeem* our *preſent* time. It is a ſaying of the Jews, which *De Dieu* quotes out of *Hillell, Noli dicere, donec vacabit mihi, differre ſtudium Legis, fortaſſe non vacabit*: and it was good counſel he gave his Scholar, that *he ſhould be ſure to repent one day before he died*; which came to this, that *he ſhould repent every day, becauſe he knew not, but that might be the day of his death.* The Apoſtle uſeth the *ſhortneſs of life*, as an argument of *labour*, 1 Cor. 7. 29. *This I ſay, brethren, the time is ſhort*: not over ſolicitous for the things of

this world, but imploying our time for the concernment of eternity.

13. Consider, That time once gone is *lost irrecoverably*. We use to say, *time staies not the parties leisure*, nor *is it to be recalled at his command*: the *foolish virgins* knock't, but it was too late, & the door was shut upon them, and they irrecoverably excluded. Time is the onely thing irrecoverable: this is a *jewel*, which if once lost, can never be found again. If you loose *Heaven*, *peace*, *libertie*, *ordinances*, nay, *God* himself, you may recover them again with seeking & pains: but *misspent-time*, as he in *Gregories* daies being sũmon'd by death, cries out, *Inducias vel ad horam, but an hour, a minute*, but could not obtain it.

14. Consider, That upon *this* time depends *eternitie*. Every man is *suæ fortunæ faber* in a sound sence: he is now laying out for himself an eternity of miseries or happines: he is laying up a *good foundation* for time to come, laying up treasure in heaven, by improving his time, or else by *despising* and *neglecting* this day of *grace*, treasuring up wrath to himself, *Rom.* 2. 4. and as the tree falls, so it will lie: as time leaves us, so eternitie will finde us: therefore, let us *redeem* the *time*.

15. Consider, The *longer* our *day* of *grace* is, if *misspent*, and *miss-improved*, the *greater* will be our *condemnation*. And God, as *Valerius Maximus* observes of *Dionysius*, *tarditatem supplicii gravitate cõpensat*: the *blow* of justice will be the *heavier*, the *longer* it is in comming. The longer God is lifting up the hand of justice, & our repentance prevent it not, the stroke wil be the greater: as *Lipsius* observes: *Gods grace and mercie, ità pœnæ intervallum est, ut sit & augmentum.* The time of Gods grace is so now a *reprieve*: that if we continue to abuse his mercie, the execution will be the *heavier*. Gray-hairs found in the way of sin at that day, will have the hottest place in everlasting burning.

Lipſ. lib. 2. cap. 13. de conſtantia.

16. Consider the *greatness* of *our work*, compared with the *shortness* of *our time*, and this may provoke us to diligence in improving it. He that hath a long journey to go in a winters day, will not loyter, but make haste. This is our case: our day is but a *winters-day*, both *sad* and *short*, our journey long, the way *narrow* and *strait*, therefore we had need hasten, and strive to enter, and *press forward toward the mark*, and *run with patience* this *spiritual race*. Our work is to get God *appeased*, our peace *made*, our election *assured*, and for these the Apostle tells us, we must σπουδάζειν, *give all diligence*. The best means for us to use in this, is oft to compute and compare our work, and our time together; *So teach us to number our daies, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdome.* Mens inapprehensiveness of the greatness of their work, or presumption upon the length of their day, makes them so remiss and negligent in improving their time, with the sluggard crying, *yet a little sleep*, and *Lord have mercy upon me*, as if this would set all streight.

2 Pet. 1. 16.

Psal. 90. 12.

17. Con-

17. Conſider, What a *ſad reflection* it will be in *hell* to remember a *miſpent* day of *grace*. *Son remember*, ſaid *Abraham* to *Dives*. Will it not be ſad for *Capernaum* to reflect thus; *I was exalted to heaven in the enjoyment of means and ordinances, but am now caſt down to hell for not improving thoſe means?* And for ſouls to reflect thus; *We had offers of grace made us, we were beſeeched tobe reconciled, we were told over and over, that we could not eſcape, if we did neglect ſo great ſalvation: but now our caſe is deſperate, we laviſhed away that time in ſin, which God gave us for repentance; and much of that time in idleneſs, when we ſhould have been at Church, and at our devotions: Well, God is juſt, our deſtruction is of our ſelves.* Such thoughts as theſe will be the Hell of Hells. Oh! What would ſuch ſouls give for a reprieve? Would they not purchaſe that time they idled and ſinned away, with ſome thouſand years continuance there, if at laſt, they might be releaſed? *Conſider this you that forget God*: while it is time redeem it, that you never come to lament the miſs-improvement of it in a ſad eternitie, when time ſhall be no more, and repentance will be too late: 'tis too late for *Eſau* to weep, when the bleſſing is gone, *Hebr.* 12. 17. Luke 16.25.

18. Conſider, The *beſt* of us have done much *diſhonour* to God in *former miſpence* of our *time*: let us therefore now *redeem* it. This argument the Apoſtle uſes to urge the laying out of our time in reference to the glory of God, in 1 *Pet.* 4. 2,3. *To live no longer the reſt of the time in the fleſh to the luſts of men, but to the will of God: for the time paſt of our lives may ſuffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, &c.* Hereby we may repair Gods honour, and teſtifie the ſincerity of our repentance and converſion. *Acerrimus ſtimulus nobis eſſe debet, ad bene currendum, dum reputamus, nos magnâ parte vitæ extra viã errâſſe*, ſaith *Calvin*. S. *Paul* had been a long time out of the way, but when once ſet into it, he *preſſeth for-ward* to have the *mark*, διώκω ἐπὶ τὸ βραβεῖον: the verie ſame word by which he expreſſeth his former perſecution, ἐδίωξα: intimating the ſame contention of, and zeal in his *Religion*, as before he had demonſtrated in his *perſecution*. *Calv. in loc.* Acts 22.4.

19. Conſider, That the *miſpence* of *time* makes thee *odious* to *God*. God abominates idleneſs: time is his creature, and he hath allowed none of it for *ſin* and *idleneſs*, though ſome of it *for honeſt recreations*. God hath ſent every one of us upon ſome errand or other into the world: if we be negligent, and ſluggiſh in it, we are like *ſmoke to the eyes*, and *vinegar to the teeth*, and an offence to the pure & holy eyes of God. Τῷ δ' θεοὶ νεμεσῶσι καὶ ἀνέρες, ὅς κεν ἀεργὸς, ſaith *Heſiod*. Prov. 10.26. *Heſiod. ſpg.* & ἡμ. v. 23.

20. Conſider the argument of the Text here; ὅτι αἱ ἡμέραι πονηραί εἰσι: *the dayes are evil*. And if ever this were preſſingly, and rationally argumentative to inforce the duty, it muſt be certainly for us. *Muſculus* complained of his times, *Adeò deploratè mala ſunt, ut nè emendari ſuſtineant, nec diutiùs ferri queant*: ſo may we of our times,

they are *unſufferable* yet *uncorrigible*. If you conſider the words either in reſpect of thoſe common evils which attend mankinde; ſuch are common afflictions, diſeaſes, wars, uncertainty of our enjoyments of life it ſelf: ſo the argument is univerſal to all perſons and times: but when times are evil in reſpect of ſome particular evils, then eſpecially is time to be redeemed, as our times now are in reſpect of a double evil, each of which enforceth this duty upon us: viz. the *growth of errour*, and the *open* and *abounding profaneneſs* among us.

I. The *Growth of errour:* and this ſhould put us upon diligence, eſpecially us, who are in, or look towards the Miniſtery: we ſhould double and redouble our diligence, that we may be able to appear againſt errour for the truth, and by *ſound doctrine* to *convince the gain-ſayers*, Tit. 1.9. When S. *Paul* ſaw the times coming, in which men would not *endure ſound doctrine, but after their own luſts heap to themſelves teachers*, being *turned away from the truth unto fables*, he thought it then very ſeaſonable to write to his beloved *Timothy*, to *be inſtant in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2, 3, 4. How much more engaged are we to diligence and induſtry, upon whom thoſe dayes which S. *Paul* onely foretold, are ſadly fallen? When the *devil* ſows moſt of the *tares* of *errour* in the field of the Church: then ſhould the *ſpiritual husbandmen* be moſt vigilant and induſtrious to *caſt* them out, leſt they *choak* and *over-grow* the *good ſeed* of the *word*. And to this end, more knowledge (I think) is requiſite to the diſcharge of the *Miniſters calling* now, then perhaps was when errour was more modeſt, and withall more reſtrained by a ſtrict diſcipline. Every man is naturally apt to applaud the production and birth of his own phanſie and imagination (ſo the *Ethiopian* thinks his *black* the greateſt beautie) and through *pride* (which is the *womb* of errour) to vent and broach this phanſie, though to the diſquiet of the Church: therefore, if not reſtrained by fear (for men naturally are ſlaviſh, not ingenuous) much more if publickly authorized, (uſually it appears with the face of authority) and the devil will be ſure to promote it; he will ſend up the *ſmoke* of the *bottomleſs pit*, to obſcure the *beauty of truth*; he will get in his *cloven* foot, and *divide* the *ſeamleſs* coat, it being the *maxime* of his Politicians, *Divide & Impera, Divide and Rule:* and here indeed is the ſource of all the errours of our times. Now then we, as Saint *Paul*, whoſe *ſpirit* was *ſtirred* in him, to ſee the idolatry of *Athens*; and whoſe zeal would not ſuffer him to do any thing *againſt the truth*, but all *for it*; we ſhould lay out our time to fit our ſelves with weapons to fight againſt errour, and defend the truth, and to countermine Sathans devices. S. *Paul* met with many oppoſitions; ſome-

ſometimes he had to do with looſe *Libertines*, who made the *free grace* he preached, a cloak of maliciouſneſs: another while with proud Phariſaical *Juſticiaries*, who denied *grace*, and cried up *works:* the Apoſtle was to grapple with both theſe, and ſo he laboured *more abundantly then all.* The great Controverſie of the former age was with the proud *Papiſt*, as S. *Paul* at *Epheſus*, with the *beaſt* of *Rome.* But he that will look now into the miniſterie, muſt reckon to deal with the ſubtil *Socinian*, the looſe *Antinomian*, the canting *Quaker*, the petulant *Anabaptiſt*, the conceited *Separatiſt*, the muddie *Atheiſt:* we had need to provide our weapons, before we go into the field; and, having ſo many ſpiritual *Goliahs* to encounter withall, it is our concernment and duty, to get our *ſling*, and our *ſmooth ſtones* out of the *brook* of the Scriptures, by which we may ſtrike them in the *fore-head:* yea, and to go down to the *Philiſtines* to *ſharpen our weapons*, I mean to furniſh our ſelves with *tongues* and *ſciences*, and *rational improvements*, to enervate the ſtrength and ſubtilties, and detect the vizards and fallacies, which errour uſually puts on to delude the ignorant and inconſiderate. Scarce any of the Fathers had ſo many errours to oppoſe as S. *Auguſtine*; the *Pelagian* on the one hand, and the *Manichee* on the other: ſo none more laborious then he, having left us many monuments of his unwearied diligence; whence he was ſtiled, *Malleus hæreticorum.* Now ſo many endeavour to raſe the foundation, the ſpiritual builders ſhould labour more in edifying the truth, and Church of God: the creeping in of ſo many *wolves* into the *flock* ſhould put the *Paſtours* upon more vigilancy, and diligence; now the darkneſs of errour, and night of ignorance is upon us: how ſhould theſe ſtars ſhine in the firmament of the Church? And while others, ſo many *Sanballats* and *Tobiahs*, endeavour to obſtruct, hinder, and overthrow the truth, we ſhould endeavour to lay out our time to enoble and patronize it.

1 Cor. 15. 10

II. The *open* and *abounding profaneneſs* that is among us, that *Atheiſme*, *licentiouſneſs*, *contempt of God* and *his word*, and thoſe other *crying* ſins, which run in the midſt of the nation, ſhould powerfully provoke us to *redeem* our *time*: and that upon a fourefold account.

1. That we may *diſcountenance* and give a *check* to *profaneneſs*, that our lives may be a conſtant *ſtanding* reproofe to the wickedneſs of the times, ſo the Apoſtle in this 5. of the *Epheſ.* enjoynes at ver. 11. *Have no fellowſhip with the unfruitfull works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them:* but how ſhall that be done? he tells us at ver. 8. *walk as the children of light*: and *Philip.* 2. 15. *that ye may ſhine as lights amidſt a crooked and perverſe generation.* The more others laviſh out and miſpend this time in looſe and licentious walking; the more ſhould

ſhould we endeavour to redeem it by a ſtrict, and conſcientious converſation.

2. It will be a *Chriſtians praiſe* and *glory* to be *good* in *bad times*, to be *good husbands* when others are *prodigals* about us. Thus S. *Auguſtine* gives a reaſon, why God permitted *Adam* at firſt to be tempted, *That he might have had the more glory, if he had uſed his libertie to reſiſt and withſtand that temptation. Non mihi videtur*, ſaith he, *magnæ laudis fuiſſe futurum hominem, ſi propterea poſſet bene vivere, quia nemo malè vivere ſuaderet.* It is leſs commendation to be good when we have no temptation to be bad: bnt when in licentious times, being on every ſide ſurrounded with temptations, we go ſtill on in a way of holineſs; this is our juſt *praiſe* and *glory*, as it was of *Lot*, to be righteous in the midſt of unclean *Sodome*.

3. In ſuch times we are in moſt *danger* to be *miſled*. *Piſcator* gives this reaſon, why the profaneneſs of the times ſhould put us upon the redeeming of the time: *quia periculum imminet piis à corruptelis mundi.* When it is, as in 1 *Joh.* 5. 19. *the whole world lies in wickedneſs*; the beſt are in great danger to be ſeduced, either into errour, ſin, or both: we ſhould therefore *redeem* the *time*, that we may be able to prevent the one, and oppoſe the other.

4. Our *redeeming* the *time* may make the times *better*. It is the evil of *ſin*, that make the *dayes* evil. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the *perillous times* which ſhould be in the *laſt dayes*, in 2 *Tim.* 3. 1. he tells you the reaſon of it, in verſes 2, 3, 4, 5. the latter of which, (viz. *Having a form of godlineſs, but denying the power*) I fear hath a great influence upon the evil of our dayes. Now the onely way to amend the times, is to amend our ſelves. God would ſoon amend the *times*, if once the *men* that live in the times were amended. It was good counſel *Daniel* gives to *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Break off thy ſins by righteouſneſs, and thine iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthning of thy tranquillity.* All men cry out of the *times*; but who cry out of, or leave their *ſins*, which make the times ſo bad? When the *Iſraelites* had ſinned in *making the calf*, *Moſes* ſpends his time in prayer, *Exod.* 32. It was *Achans* wedge, that made it a *bad* day to *Iſreal*: when he was removed, God was appeaſed, *Joſh.* 7. Our times are evil; let us not repiningly deſpond or quarrel, but let us lay out our time in prayer and repentance to make them better. And ſo much of the ſecond General.

3. *General* Thirdly, Who are eſpecially concerned in this. Though indeed none can be exempted from this, yet we ſhall ſee, that ſome are more eſpecially concerned in it: and theſe I ſhall reduce to theſe ſix ranks.

1. *Young*

1. *Young ones.* These should especially *redeem* their *time.* *Young* Merchants are most vigorous and active in their trading. It is the *Wisemans* counsel, *Eccles.* 12. 1: *Remember thy Creatour in the dayes of thy youth:* it briefly suggests several considerations, which may provoke youth to a diligent *improvement* of their *time*: as,

1. Consider, This is most *worthy of*, and most *acceptable unto* God, to give *him* the best of our time, *who* best deserves it: it is most unworthy of God, to give him our feeble age, when Satan hath had the strength of our youth spent in his service: to give the *spirits* of the wine to Satan, and the *dregs* to God. *Nonne pudet te id temporis bonæ menti reservare, quod in nullam rem conferre potest?* saith *Seneca:* to give to God that time, which the infirmities of age makes useless for any thing else? Give me leave to make use of that of the Prophet *Malachy*, Will the Prince think you entertain a *cripled rebel*, who hath been all his dayes fighting against him under his enemies colours? Wilt thou give the best of thy life unto Satan, be under his service, and think to *list* thy self under Christs *banner*, to fight the *good fight* of *faith*, when thy strength and activity fails thee? *Tunc vivere incipere, cùm desinendum est; & indè velle vitam inchoare, quò pauci produxerunt*, as the Heathen sayes: *Then to begin to live, when you should die, and to date your life from that time, to which the life but of a few is lengthned.* God, under the Law, would have no *blinde*, or *lame* for *sacrifice*, as in *Deut.* 25. 21. The *first-born* were *holy to God:* and he required not onely the *first-fruits*, but the *first* of those *first-fruits*, Exod. 23. 19. All which was to signifie unto us, that *young years* offered to God, are a *sweet-smelling* savour in his nostrils. Mal. 1.8.

2 Consider, This is most for your *comfort:* that you may in time of age, affliction, and death, with peace and comfort reflect upon your youth, the mispence whereof does oft cause sad reflections of spirit in riper years, and fills the soul with horrour and amazement. *Job* was made to *possess the iniquities of his youth:* his youth had the pleasure of those sins, which his age now felt the smart of. When *guilt* shall flie in the face of an *awakened* conscience, and God for them shall exercise the soul with *inward* terrours, as *Job* describes the condition of a wicked man, *Job* 20. 11. *Pœnis quas sibi sceleribus adolescentiæ acquisivit*, sayes *Beza*, *with those punishments*, which are the issue of the sins of youth: nay, though God hath upon your repentance pardoned those sins, yet he may in old age chasten thee for them; then you may come sadly to speak that language, *Rom.* 6. 21. *What fruit have we in those sins, whereof we are now ashamed?* These questionless cost *David* many a sad tear, and mournful prayer, as we see in *Psalm.* 25. 7. *Remember not*

the ſins of my youth. As it is in the *body*, licentious *youth* contracts thoſe *diſtempers*, which are the burden and ſorrow of *old age*, filling them with pains and aches: So it is in the *ſoul*, thoſe *ſins*, which by miſpence of time youth ruſh into, may prove the ſorrow and vexation of age: but *well-improved* youth makes age comfortable.

3. Conſider, It will be an *Antidote* and *prevention* againſt thoſe *ſins*, which *youth* is moſt *liable* and *prone* to. Youth having leſs wiſedome to diſcover, and leſs ſtrength to reſiſt and withſtand temptation to ſin, more open to ſolicitation by reaſon of unruly paſſions, bad examples, and councel of others, is moſt liable to ſin. *Wherewith ſhall a young man cleanſe his way?* ſaith *David* Pſal. 119. 9. theſe being moſt ſubject to defilements: *David* anſwers the queſtion, *By taking heed thereto according to thy word,* and one of the precepts of that word is *To redeem our time. Flee youthful luſts*, ſaies *Paul* to *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 22. the flames of luſt are moſt apt to enkindle by the heat of youth.

Horat. de Arte Poet.

—Cereus in vitium flecti monitoribus aſper,

So *Horace*, *Youth is wax to every impreſſion of vice:* and the Poet gives you the reaſon of it.

Quæritur, Ægyſthus quare ſit factus adulter:
In promptu cauſa eſt, deſidioſus erat.

It was his *idle miſpence* of time which *blew up* and *fomented* the *ſparkes* of luſt for

Otia ſi tollas periêre Cupidinis arcus.

4. Conſider, It is your *gathering* time, and an *age* moſt *capable* of improvement: as *tender* twigs, moſt *flexible*, as *wax* fit for *good impreſſions.* Whereas, if this time be miſpent, the *heart* grows hard through cuſtome in ſin, the *devil* gets ſtronger poſſeſſion, the *memory* grows more unfaithful, the *underſtanding* weaker: God is provoked in a judicial way to take away your *gifts* and *parts* which you juſtly forfeit by a careleſs wrapping your *talents* in a *napkin.* The *Wiſeman* ſends ſuch ſluggards to the Ant to learn wiſedome: *She provideth her meat in ſummer*, Prov. 6. 8. So ſoon as the ſun ariſeth the *bee* flies abroad to gather in her *honey*: in youth our parts are active and vigorous, therefore then *redeem your time.*

5. Conſider, This will both *ſweeten* and *facilitate* employment to you afterward. The ſins of youth oft make men unſerviceable in riper years, or if repented of and forſaken, yet they are oft a reproach and diſcouragement to men in their employments. *Ephraim* was *aſhamed*, becauſe ſhe *bore the reproach of her youth*, Jer. 31. 19. S. *Paul* therefore writing to his young *Timothy* enformes him how to ſecure himſelf from contempt: *Theſe things command and teach*, &

ſo,

ſo, *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 11, 12. Sins of youth lay men open to reproach, even then, when afterwards they prove eminent & ſerviceable in the work of God. Beſides, miſpence of youth muſt neceſſarily make our ſervice and employment abroad more difficult: for men to have their ſeed to ſeek, when a harveſt is expected from them: whereas your laborious improvement of this time makes ſervice eaſy and familiar, when having laid up a treaſure and ſtock of knowledge he is able, as the Scribe inſtructed to the kingdome of Heaven, *to bring out of his treaſure things new and old.* Matth. 13. 52.

6. Redeem this time in *conformity* to *Chriſt*, and the *beſt Saints*. *Chriſt* was at twelve years of age about his *Fathers buſineſs*, *Luk.* 2. 44. *Samuel* in his childhood was dedicated to the Lord. 1. *Sam.* 1. 28. *Timothy* from a child redeemed his time to the *ſtudy* of *the Scripture*. 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. And it is recorded as a juſt commendation of that good Prince *Joſiah*, that *while yet young*, he *began to ſeek after the God of David his father*, and *at twelve years old* zealously appeared againſt Idolatry. 2 *Chron.* 34. 3. Let us then tread in the footſteps of theſe Saints, and be followers of them, as they were of Chriſt, who redeemed his whole time to the ſervice and glory of his Father.

II. The ſecond rank of thoſe who are moſt eſpecially concerned in this is, ſuch *men* as are *of greater abilities and opportunities*. To whom God gives *ten* talents, he expects an improvement from them, anſwerable to that they are intruſted with: the improvement of *five* will not ſerve for him, who hoth received *ten*. *To whom much is given, of him much ſhall be required*, *Luc.* 12. 48. Mens great *gifts* and *parts* are ready to puff them up with pride: S. *Paul* was in danger of this 2 *Cor.* 12. 8. and this is the abuſe of the *gifts* of God, which, if rightly uſed and improved, ſhould not *leaven* us with *pride*, but engage & quicken us to more ſerviceableneſs for God, and not cenſuring the *gifts* of others (by which practiſe we either charge God for giving them no more, or ſacrifice ſacrilegiouſly to our ſelves, that we have ſo much; when as *we have nothing, but what is received*) endeavour to improve, and uſe our own.

III. The third rank: ſuch, *who by idleneſs and looſeneſs have miſpent much time formerly*: The Apoſtle *Peter* urgeth this. 1 *Pet.* 4. 2, 3. The later any of us have come into the vineyard, the harder muſt we labour to get our work done before the evening of our daies, when our account is to be made. As the Merchant, (to which I told you the expreſſion ἐξαγοραζόμενοι was an alluſion) who comes when the mart is ready to break up, he will haſten his traffick, and double his diligence; ſo a traveller that overſleeps himſelf

in the morning, will be upon the ſpur all the day after, that he may come to his journeys end in time: ſo ſhould thoſe who have loitered and idled away much of their time formerly, now with the more earneſtneſs preſs towards the mark, and run the race that is ſet before them.

IV. Thoſe *who are engaged in ſpecial ſervice for God*: ſuch are *Magiſtrates* and *Miniſters*. Of the firſt you know what the Poet ſaith, *Hom. Il. β.* ἐ χρὴ παννύχιον εὕδειν βουληφόρον ἄνδρα, *A Magiſtrate muſt not ſleep a whole night*: but the other is more conſiderable; *we* muſt be *labourers*, not *loiterers* in Gods vineyard: as they are deſcribed *Heb.* 13.17. αὐτὶ ἀγρυπνοῦσιν, the word ſignifies, *Noctes inſomnes agere*, as they that *watch*. S. *Paul* was ἐν ἀγρυπνίαις, in theſe *watchings* often, 2 *Cor.* 6.5. Diligence and labour is commendable in any; but in none more, then in a Miniſter of the Goſpel. The *Prieſt* under the *law* had the *ſhoulder* in the *Sacrifice*, to intimate *that burden* and *labour*, which lay upon him. See what employment S. *Paul* puts upon his young *Timothy*, 1 *Tim.* 4.13,14. *Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine*, &c. And if you conſider duely that exact *Scripture-knowledge*, and in order to that, the knowledge of *tongues*, *arts* and *ſciences*, to qualifie a man for that employment, together with the end of it, the *concernment* of ſouls: (and adde the danger of negligence in this work, God having pronounced him curſed, *Jerem.* 48.10. and that *thoſe ſouls* ſhall be *required at our hands*, who periſh through our negligence, *Ezek.* 3. 18. as *Judah* ſtood engaged for *Benjamin*, ſo *Miniſters* for ſouls: God will *require*, God will *require* an *account* of *them* from *them*;) you will eaſily conclude it *their* intereſt more eſpecially then others, to *redeem* this *time*. *Gen* 43.9.

V. Thoſe eſpecially are engaged, *who live in theſe places*, and that not *onely* becauſe *we* have *greater opportunities* (of which before) but *chiefly* becauſe our *improvements* are the *intereſt* and *concernment* both of Church and State. All mens eyes are fixt upon us, and their expectations are from us, and therefore we muſt *redeem* our *time*, that we may be a credit to our places, and a bleſſing unto the Church, and be able by our ſerviceableneſs, when God calls us out, to give an account of the expence of our time here, by contending for the faith againſt all novel encroachments of errour, hereſie, and the like.

VI. And laſtly, Thoſe eſpecially, *who have had experience of the grace of God, who are truely enlightned, and brought home unto Chriſt*. And therefore you may obſerve, that the Apoſtle urgeth this dutie upon the *Epheſians*, from the conſideration of their *regenerate* condition, *Epheſ.* 5. 8. *Ye were ſometimes darkneſs, but now are ye light in*

in the Lord; therefore it follows, *walk as children of the light*: and having again ſaid at *ver.* 14. *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give the light*; it follows in *ver.* 15. *walk circumſpectly, not as fools* (as formerly, miſpending, and laviſhing out your precious time) *but as wiſe*; and that hath reference to this, *Redeeming your time*. So the Apoſtle elſewhere frequently argues from the *change* of our *ſtate* and *condition*, to the *change* of our *converſation*: ſo *Rom.* 13. 11. *And that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of ſleep: for now is our ſalvation nearer*: and at *verſe* 12. *The night is far ſpent, the day is at hand, let us therefore caſt off the works of darkneſs, and put on the armour of light*, &c. However men ſleep in the *night*, yet when the *Sun* ariſeth, *man goeth forth unto his labour*; ſo however men idle in the night of their *unregeneracie*, when the *Sun of righteouſneſs is riſen* upon them, then they muſt *up* and *be working*. Obſerve again, how the Apoſtle urges this in 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 5, 6. *Ye are all children of the light, and of the day, we are not of the night, nor of the darkneſs: Therefore let us not ſleep, as do others, but let us watch, & be ſober*. And therefore *Paul* himſelf, that had *wickedly* miſs-ſpent his time, in perſecuting of the Church, and blaſpheming God, when once he was brought home, deſires to improve it for God: and therefore calls out, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* and this briefly upon theſe conſiderations, which I do but *touch*, and leave to your ſelves to be *enlarged*.

Pſal. 104 23.

Acts. 9. 16.

1. *They have more to improve then others*. They have not onely *common gifts*, but a talent of *ſpecial grace*, which they ſhould trade with, and endeavour to improve.

2. *They have the greateſt mercie to engage them*. The *Wiſeman* urges it upon ſome, in conſideration of the great work of *creation*, *Remember thy Creatour in the days of thy youth*: how much more ſhould an intereſt in the work of *redemption* wrought by Chriſt engage unto this? he having *redeemed* us to this end, that we might *redeem our time* for *his ſervice*, Luke 1. 74.

Eccleſ. 12. 1.

3. *They have the greateſt hopes in their eyes to encourage them*. Conſider, how laborious and diligent he will be, who hath the obtaining of a *kingdome* in his eyes: and ſhould not Chriſtians much more, eyeing their inheritance incorrruptible, and that kingdome, which fadeth not away: *For which cauſe*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *we faint not*, &c. 2 *Cor.* 4. 16. but upon what ground? becauſe *we know that he, which raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe us up alſo by Jeſus*, verſe 14. and, *we look not at the things which are ſeen, which are but temporal, but at the things which are not ſeen, which are eternal*, verſe 18.

4. They are beſt able to judge of the *pretiouſneſs* of time, and

how much it is their concernment to improve it, they having the glory of God, and their own ſalvation in their eye; they know what the miſpence of time means; it hath been the burden of their ſpirit, and the ſadneſs of their ſouls; they know and ſee into the danger of laviſhing out their time, which others, who diſcern none of theſe, prodigally throw away.

5. And laſtly, Their *miſ-improvement* of time is the greateſt *ſcandal* unto others. Every one is apt to take offence at, and encourage themſelves in looſneſs by, the remiſſneſs and idleneſs of thoſe, who own Chriſt, and profeſs the Goſpel. *When my foot ſlippeth,* Pſal. 38.16. ſaith *David, they magnifie themſelves againſt me.* So the Apoſtle tels us of the Jews, *Rom.* 2. 24. that *the name of God was blaſphemed among the Gentiles through them.* And, how apt are men to take an occaſion by our idleneſs to reproach Learning, and Religion too? The Apoſtle therefore, with whom I ſhall conclude the Doctrinal part of theſe words, exhorts; *Walk in wiſdome towards them that are without, Redeeming the time,* Coloſſ. 4.5.

4 *General. Application.* Fourthly, The improvement of this by ſome Application. And the Application of this ſhall be onely twofold.

1. To *check* and *reprove* mens *miſpence,* and *miſ-improvement* of their *time.* Nothing more precious, yet nothing leſs regarded: may we not complain of many, who profeſs themſelves Chriſtians, as *Epiſt.* 1. *Seneca* does of the Heathens; *Magna pars vitæ malè agentibus, maxima nihil agentibus, tota aliud agentibus dilabitur.* We hold our time of God, as our great *Landlord,* and how are moſt like to bad *Tenants,* who return little or no homage to him for it: but improve Gods talents in the devils ſervice. *Quem mihi dabis,* ſaith *Seneca, qui aliquod temporis pretium ponat, qui diem æſtimat: Where ſhall we finde a man, who ſets a due value and eſtimate upon his time?* What between doing nothing, and that which is worſe then nothing, ſin, moſt mens time ſlips away. I onely ſuggeſt unto you this; Time will have an end ſpeedily, and what will you do, when God calls to an account of that time which you have ſpent upon your luſts, and though it may ſeem to have been pleaſant, yet without repentance it will be very ſad: even as it fared with thoſe jolly ones, in *Job* 21. 12, 13. *They take the timbrel, and harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the organ. They ſpend their dayes in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave:* and well were it for them, if they might reſt there; but it will be more horrible, as in *verſe* 30 of that chapter, *The wicked is reſerved to the day of deſtruction, they ſhall be brought forth unto the day of wrath.*

2. To *quicken* us to a *conſcientious performance* of this duty by a *laborious improvement* of our time. This the Apoſtle preſſes, 1. *Theſſ.*

Theſſ. 4. 11. *That ye ſtudy to be quiet, and do your own buſineſs:* and again in 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 10, 11. *For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither ſhould he eat: For we hear that there are ſome which walk among you diſorderly,* ἀτάκτως. Diſorderly walking, eſpecially in miſpending, and miſ-improving our time, is very unſuitable to a Chriſtian. I ſhall therefore ſhew you briefly, to what end, and how you ſhould improve your time conſcientiouſly, and ſo diſmiſs the Text. It muſt be don,

I. To the *glory of God: Whatſoever you do,* ſaith the Apoſtle, *do all to the glory of God,* 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. Did we conſider this in the improving our time in our ſtudies, and ask our ſelves this queſtion, *Can God have any glory from this kinde of ſtudie?* it would certainly cut off the ſtudy of many unprofitable, impertinent, idle books, which inable men onely for ſome idle frothy diſcourſe, to the diſhonour of the great God, Time is Gods creature, and his *talent*, therefore to be imployed onely to his *glory*.

II. To the *good of others.* So the Apoſtle expreſſely, *Gal.* 6. 10. Καιρὸν ἔχομεν: *While we have time, let us do good unto all.* That *Romane* Emperour ſet a juſt eſtimate upon his time, who accounted *that day loſt, in which he had done no good unto ſome.* This concerns thoſe eſpecially, who are intruſted with the care of others. *Titus Veſpaſian* was wont to ſay, *Hodie non imperavi, quia nemini beneſeci:* a ſpeech worthy of an Emperour, whoſe chief care ſhould be for the publick good; ſo ſhould we alſo, who are entruſted with the care of others, account that day *miſ-ſpent*, in which we have not endeavored ſome way to *better* them, *Ut non negligunt opportunitatem lucrifaciendi errantes, incredulos, inter quos vivebant,* ſayes *Muſculus*: ſo alſo the Apoſtle exhorts, *Coloſſ.* 4. 5. *Walk wiſely to them that are without, redeeming the time.*

III. *To our own ſalvation,* neglecting no opportunity whereby we may promote it, willingly engaging in every dutie and practiſe, which hath a tendencie to it: thus *working out our ſalvation with fear and trembling.* Phil. 2. 12. But withall we muſt obſerve, that this muſt be done,

1. *Preſently*, leſt it be too *late.* As *Thales* being ſolicited to marrie when *young*, anſwered Ὄψε γαμεῖς, *It is too ſoon*; when *old*, Οὐκ ἔτι γαμεῖς, *It is too late:* ſo many, who have thought much too *ſoon* to dedicate themſelves to God, in their age have ſadly in the deſpair of their ſpirit cryed out, *It is too late*: let us reſolve therefore as *Elihu* in *Job*, *If I have done iniquity, I will do no more*, Job 34. 32. that is, in miſpending, and miſ-improving our time, but in the preſent redeeming of it. It is one of the *maſter-pieces* of Satan, to deſtroy ſoules, by tempting them to defer and delay the improvement of their time, ſuggeſting unto

unto them, *It will be time enough afterward:* thus the yong *Gallant* is perſwaded to ſpend his time in *pride*, and *vanity*, till he hath none left to *pray*, *repent*, and *return* in. As a cunning uſurer flatters his debtour, tells him *all will be well*, till he hath failed his day, and then ſeizeson his land: ſo Satan flatters men into ſecurity, perſwades them that they have day *enough* before them, till they have ſinned away their day of *grace*, ſo God is provoked at laſt to give them up to that maſter, whom they have ſerved all their time, to receive their wages in eternity of miſery. Curſed be that Proverb, *A young Saint, an old Devil*: you do not oft ſee *young Devils* prove *old Saints*. *Solomon* gives better advice, *Prov.* 22. 6. *Train up a child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old, he will never depart from it*: and the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *It is good for a man, that he bear the yoke in his youth:* the *yoke* of *obedience*, as well as of *affliction*. Let me reaſon then with you, as S. *Auguſtine* did ſometimes with himſelf, *Quam diù cras & cras, quare non hodie? Modò & Modò non habent modum.* We ſhould redeem every day, as if it were our laſt. *Ille beatiſſimus eſt, & ſui ſecurus poſſeſſor, qui craſtinum ſine ſolicitudine expectat: Quiſquis dixit* vixi, *quotidie ad lucrum ſurget*, ſaith *Seneca*. We ſhould without anxiety or ſolicitude expect a morrow, and with diligence and conſcience improve to day. *To day*, while it is called to day, *if ye will hear his voice* &c. *Hebr.* 3. 15.

Lam. 3. 27.

Aug. Confeſſ. lib. 8. cap. 5.

Senec. ep. 12.

2. *Reſolvedly*, leſt you be hindered: you will meet with many impediments, much difficulty, and many temptations to miſpend your time, we need therefore take up a *reſolution* to go through: ſo long as there is a Devil and a world *without*, and fleſh *within*, we muſt expect to meet with impediments in every religious way: but we ought in the ſtrength of God to reſolve againſt them, to avoid, and encounter them. Eccleſ. 11. 4. *He that obſerveth the wind, ſhall not ſow, and he that regardeth the clouds ſhall not reap*; and he that makes difficulty an argument againſt duty, ſhall never perform any. Difficulties ſhould make a Chriſtian more diligent and watchfull, not more ſecure, and careleſs. *Solomon* marks him for a *ſluggard*, that pretends *a lion in the way*, why he ſhould not *go forward*, Prov. 22. 13. *Cùm ità corruptum eſt ſeculum, videtur diabolus tyrannidem occupare, ut non poſsit tempus Deo conſecrari, niſi quodammodo redemptum*, ſo *Calvin*. *Daniel* would *redeem* his time for *prayer*, though he knew for certain, he ſhould be caſt into the *den* of *lions*: and the *three children* would not *worſhip* the *golden image*, though they knew a *fiery furnace*, *heat ſeven times hotter then ordinary*, was provided for them: nor the *Apoſtles deſiſt* from *preaching* though they knew they were ſure to *ſuffer* for it: and not onely ſo, but they *rejoyce* that they could *redeem* their *time* at *this rate*, Acts 14. 18, 19. You may

Calv. in loc.

perhaps

perhaps meet with contempt, *David* was the *ſong of the drunkards*; you cannot *dance before the Ark of God*, but you ſhall have a *ſcoffing Michal*; be *loaded with reproaches*, as S. *Paul* was, who yet *gloried* in them; you muſt remember to go through all *reſolvedly*, to *redeem* your *time* to God. The *Primitive* Chriſtians *bought* this *time* with the *price* of their *bloud*, that they might *conſecrate* it to God. S. *Paul* would go up to *Jeruſalem*, to preach the Goſpel, though *his life* lay at ſtake for it, *I am ready not onely to be bound, but to die at Jeruſalem*, Acts 21. 13. Pſal. 69. 12. 2 Sam. 6. 16 2 Cor. 12. 10

3. *Perſeveringly*, leſt you be turned back. It is one of Satans methods in his temptations, when Chriſtians have been performing *duties*, eſpecially if with *freedome* and *enlargement*, to tempt them after that to *remit* of their *watch*, and be *ſecure*, and ſo gets advantage over them: we muſt not make the *improvement* of *one* day an argument of *miſpending* the *next*, but lay out *every* day by labour and diligence. It will be the priviledge of Saints in heaven, that they *reſt from their labours*; while they are here, they muſt καλοεργάζεσθαι: *work* and *work out* their *ſalvation with fear and trembling*: they will find conſtantly *much* work to do; *old corruptions to mortifie*; *ſins* to *repent of*, and *pray againſt*; *graces* to *act* and *increaſe*; *gifts* to be *ſtirred up*; *comforts* to be *maintain'd* and *upheld*; *perſonal* and *relative duties* to be *performed*; *general* and *particular callings* to be *attended*; *ſeveral relations* to be *filled up*: and this will take up our time here, if ſeriouſly remembred. Rev. 14. 13. Phil. 2. 12.

But do you allow (ſome may ſay) *no time for Recreations?* Yes, ſo they be not too *expenſive* of time, but *enablements* to our particular ſervices.

No time for enjoyment of friends? Yes, *much*, and by that you may beſt *redeem* your time, by diſcourſes to the edifying and building up of one another in your *moſt holy faith*. *What no time for ſecular employments?* Yes, *employment* in thy *calling* is *redeeming* thy time: and if thou doeſt not ſo employ thy calling, as therein to *provide* for *thine own*, *thou art worſe then an infidel*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. I ſpeak onely of laviſhing out your time in the ſervice of ſin. And therefore, to draw to a concluſion, Remember, that if he, that wrapped up his *talent* in a *napkin*, was *caſt*, as an *unprofitable ſervant*, into *utter darkneſs*, as it is *Matth.* 25. what place in everlaſting burnings ſhall be laid out for them, who *laviſh* out their *talents* in the *ſervice* of their *luſts*, and *ſacrifice* their *time conſtantly* unto the devil, and the world? But he that *improves* his *time*, and *talents*, though never ſo *ſmall*, ſhall be rewarded by God with a moſt ample and everlaſting reward: for, *Bleſſed is that ſervant, whom his Maſter, when he cometh, ſhall finde ſo doing*. Jude, v. 20. Matth. 24. 46.

FINIS. R

THE BARREN SOIL,

OR,

The GROUNDS and REASONS OF UNPROFITABLENESS under the means of GRACE;

Together with the ſuitable remedies and cures, diſcovered in the following Sermons on *HEBR.* 4. 2.

By JOHN FROST, *B. D.* late Fellow of S. *JOHNS* Colledge in *CAMBRIDGE.*

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Heb. 4. 2.

Οὐκ ὠφέλησεν ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς ἐκείνους.

The word preached did not profit them.

Luther lays this down as the character of a *good Divine*, To be *able rightly to distinguish between Law and Gospel. Qui bene nôrit discernere Evangelium à Lege, gratias agat Deo, & sciat se esse Theologum.* Upon this account sure, they are bad ones who confine the Gospel to the times of, and after Christ; as if the Jews before Christ had been wholly under a *Covenant* of *works*, having Law onely without any Gospel preached to them: an assertion which the discovery of that πρωτ-ευαγγέλιον, Gen. 3.15. of the *seed* of the *woman*; the *prophesies*, *types*, and *sacrifices* sufficiently evince to be false and unsound; but we need go no further for a confutation of this errour, then the words immediately before my Text, where the Apostle speaking of the Jews in the wilderness, tells us they were εὐηγγελισμένοι, *evangelized*, or *gospelled* as well as we now, *& insinuet idem Evangelium*, saith *Camero*, the same Doctrine for substance, though not for clearness of Revelation, which the Apostle takes notice of, as the chief *priviledge* of the Jew above the Gentile, Rom. 3. 2. and this as their glory, that to them did *belong the covenants and the promises*, Rom. 9.4. and the *Psalmist* as a *distinctive* priviledge to the Jew, Psal. 147. 19, 20. A *promise* they had of entring *Canaan* as *typically* of their *everlasting rest*; but they fell short of it *through unbelief*, Heb. 3.19. The Gospel was preached to them, but *because of unbelief*, being not mixed with *faith*, it became unprofitable to them, Οὐκ ὠφέλησεν ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς ἐκείνους, saith the Text.

Fabritius, loc. Com. Luth. pag. 82.

A little for Explication.

Λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς.] We translate it, *the word preached*; it is fully, and so in your margins, *the word of hearing*, which briefly hints and suggests these two things,

First, *Most worthy* to be heard. Whether we consider the *authour* of it, *God* himself; or the *exeellency* of the things *revealed*, *Christ*, and *Salvation* by him; or the *excellent end* of the word of God, which is *to make us perfect in every good work*, and *wise unto salvati-* 2 Tim. 3. 15, 17.

Clemens, p. 27. *ſalvation*, the word being ἐφόδιον ζωῆς αἰδίου, as *Clemens* calls it: as the *manna* to the *Iſraelites*; our *viaticum* to our heavenly *Canaan*. Others may be heard in their time and place, *Plato*, and *Ariſtotle*, *Aquinas*, and *Auſtin*: I think they are too ſevere and mo oſe, who think theſe not worth lending an ear too. The *Gibeonites* may *draw water* to the *Sanctuary*; the *Egyptian pearls* may *enrich* the Iſraelites; the *Gentiles* may be afforded an *outward room* in the *Court* of the *Temple*. There is certainly excellent uſe of the *Fathers* of the Church, to evidence the conſent of *truth* and *unity* in ſeveral ages; and if ever to be liſtned to, in this age, (wherein we have almoſt loſt the truth in a crowd of errours) wherein yet they are moſt neglected. To me, next to Scripture-evidence, *univerſal conſent* (if there be ſuch a thing to be found) ſeems the moſt cogent for embracing doctrines of faith; we ſhould eſpecially *attend* to what the Revel. 2. 7. *Spirit ſaith unto the Churches*. But others may be liſtned to, ſo they be cited without affectation and vain-glory. S. *Paul* was reſolved againſt coming to his *Corinthians* with *enticing* words of *mans wiſdome*, as deſiring to *know* himſelf, and *preach* to others *nothing* but Chriſt, and *him crucified*: yet himſelf hath adopted more then one of the expreſſions of the Heathens into Scripture, and eſpecially, when he preached at *Athens*, cited one of their own Poets, *Act.* 17. 28. But all others are *onely* to be heard, *as* they conform to the word of God, which is λόγῳ τῆς ἀκοῆς, as *moſt worthy* to be heard. That's the firſt.

Secondly, As *moſt neceſſary* to be heard; and that both in reſpect of *Divine command*, and in reference to *our own good*, for our *illu-* Pſal. 19. 8, 9. *mination*: for as *Clemens* ſaith, Ὥσπερ ἡλίου μὴ ὄντος ἕνεκα τῶν ἄλλων ἄστρων νυξ ἂν ἦν ὅλη ἄπαντι, ſo is the *world*, ſo is the *ſoul* without the *light* of the word of God, notwithſtanding all the *ſtar-light* of other knowledge. So neceſſary for the begetting and increaſing faith, it is ἀκοὴ τῆς πίστεως, Gal. 3. 2. and the Apoſtle makes it an impoſsibility in an ordinary way, to *believe without hearing*, Rom. 10. 14. πῶς πιστεύσουσιν; *How ſhall they believe?* that is, ordinarily they cannot. So again neceſſary for the begetting and upholding the Iſa. 57. 19. *comforts* through the Spirit, creating the *fruits of the lips peace*. In a word *neceſſary*, as the *fiery pillar* to gvide us to our heavenly *Canaan*: for 'tis ῥῆμα ζωῆς, *Acts* 5. 20. *the word of life*; λόγῳ τῆς σωτηρίας, *Acts* 13. 26. *the Goſpel of ſalvation*, *Epheſ.* 1. 13. *Neceſſary* for our *ſpiritual ſtrength* and *growth*; the vvant of it is compared to a *famine*. What *weak* bodies have men in a *famine*? what *ſtarved* ſouls under the *want* of the word of God? ſo as it is *moſt worthy of hearing* in *it ſelf*; ſo *moſt neceſſary* to be *heard* in reſpect of *us*. It is λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς. Οὐκ ὠφέλησεν,] *It did not profit*; that is, not *truly* and *ſavingly*.

ly. From this expoſition you may eaſily prevent me in your thoughts, in what muſt be the ſubject of my diſcourſe; viz. *Unprofitableneſs under the means of grace, the preaching of the Goſpel.*

In ſpeaking to which, leſt (as it was ſaid of *Diogenes*, that he trampled upon *Plato's* pride, but *majori cum faſtu*,) I ſhould preach unprofitably, whileſt I ſpeak againſt *unprofitableneſs* under *preaching*; I ſhall confine my ſelf to this plain, practical, and (I hope) profitable Doctrine.

Doctrine. *The generalitie, or moſt of thoſe who hear the word, do not truely and ſavingly profit by it.* A truth, which they that run may read in the experience of this preſent age; in which (I think, I may ſay it without any diſhonourable reflexion upon the former, or pride of preſent times) the Goſpel was never more frequently, or powerfully preached; yet how little profit by it, I call to witneſs the *profanation* of *Sabbaths*, *noon-day-ſins*, *neglect* of *ordinances*, *contempt* of *Miniſters*, thoſe *monſtrous Sects* and *Hereſies*, thoſe outrages and that *profaneneſs*, which prevails amongſt us; which might juſtly aſtoniſh and amaze us, did not this leſſen the wonder, that from the firſt preaching of the Goſpel it hath been ſo. At the firſt *dawning* of the Goſpel, in that promiſe of the *ſeed* of the *woman* to *break the ſerpents head*, yet *Cain* a *murtherer*: Afterward *Noah* was a *preacher of righteouſneſs*, yet the old world remain *ungodly*. *Iſaiah* complaineth, *who hath believed our report?* Deſcend to our Saviours times, there you finde Chriſt himſelf preaching, the *Phariſees* deriding him, *Luke* 16.14. In the Apoſtles times, *Paul* preached Chriſt at *Athens*, and there he is accounted a *babler*, and *a ſetter forth of ſtrange gods*, Acts 17.18. Again, he preacheth to a company of women, and onely *Lydia's* heart's opened, *Acts* 16 14. *Simon* heard the word, and yet remained in the *gall of bitterneſs*, Acts 8.23. And the Apoſtle applies the Prophets complaint to Goſpel-times, *Lord, who hath believed our report?* Rom.10.16. The Word is compared to *meat*; but the richeſt fare will not make ſome men fat and thriving: to *ſeed*; yet you know in the Parable *Mat.* 13.3. but one of thoſe four grounds, into which it was caſt, was good, and brought forth fruit, *verſe* 23. So, though this *ſeed* of the Word was ſown in Jeruſalem by the hand, yea, and watered too by the tears of her Saviour, yet ſhe remained *fruitleſs* and *barren*, and at Chriſts ſecond coming, he ſhall finde *iniquity abounding*, *charitie* cold, and ſcarce *faith* on the earth, *Matthew* 24 12.

2 Pet.2.5. Iſa.53.1. Luke 19.41.

Ih proſecution of which Doctrine I ſhall ſhew,

Firſt, What it is *ſavingly to profit by the Word.*

Secondly, The *grounds* and *reaſons* of moſt mens unprofitableneſs under the Wor d.

Third-

Thirdly, Apply it in two words, one to the *Miniſter*, and the other to the *people*.

1. *Partic.* For the firſt:

In this it is neceſſarie to ſpeak diſtinctly, thereby to correct thoſe common miſtakes whereby moſt men do dangerouſly delude themſelves. One *remembers* the Text; a ſecond picks a *flower* of Rhetorick; a third runs away with a *notion*; a fourth *admires* the preacher; a fifth gets a little floating *head-knowledge*; a ſixth makes a few formal *reſolutions*; a ſeventh is ſomewhat *moved* and *affected* at a Sermon; another laſtly *praiſeth* the *quaintneſs* and *elegancie* of the preacher: and each of theſe thinks himſelf abundantly *profited* by the Word.

It is then,

I. Not to *profit* and *advantage* a mans ſelf in *the world* by the profeſſion and conſtant hearing of the Word: though this be all the profit they look after, *who count gain godlineſs*. 1 Tim. 6. 5. Men care for the Goſpel no longer then it is conſiſtent with their wordly advantages, who when they come to ſerve God in attendance upon his word, ſecretly ſacrifice to the Idol *Self*, and propound no more to themſelves, then *ſecular* advantages. *Quantas nobis divitias comparavit hæc fabula Chriſti?* as *Leo* the tenth was oft heard to ſay. Men may eſteem the Goſpel but a *Fable*, and yet adhere to it for *outward* advantages; care not for *Diana*, but her *ſilver-ſhrines*; that affect not the Goſpel ſo much, as that *reſpect* and *profit* it brings them in. That this is the temper of many, is evident from this; that if the world ſolicites *Demas*, he forſakes *Paul*; 2 Tim. 4. 10. the Scribe cares not for following Chriſt, though he profeſſed zealouſly, when once he underſtood he had not where to *lay his head*; Mat. 8. and many ſuch followers we have, like thoſe, *John* 6. 26. who followed Chriſt, not for *love* to his *perſon* or *doctrine*, but for the gain of the *loaves*.

II. Not to *admire* or *praiſe* the *preacher*. The Church is not a *Theater*, but a *Market*; and it is not a *plaudite* that's expected from you, to cloſe the Sermon with a *humme*; but that you ſhould be trading here for ſpiritual merchandize; that you may go from hence richer in *faith*, and more encreaſed in all *grace*. *Ezekiels* preaching was to the Jews as a very *pleaſant ſong*, yet they profited not by it, for they did not *practiſe*, but their hearts went after their *covetouſneſs*, Ezek. 33. 31, 32. So oft as you *approve* the *Preacher* and his *Doctrine*, and do not ſo *profit* as to *practiſe* it, you are ſelf-condemned, and guiltie in the judgement of your own conſciences.

III. Not *onely* to be enlightned by the Word. I know *ſpiritual*

tual illumination is the *firſt work* of the Spirit by the Word, where it ſavingly profits; S. *Paul* was ſent to the Gentiles firſt to *open their eyes*: but that which I here aſſert is, that there may much *common illumination* be wrought by the Word of God, where it doth not *ſavingly* profit. It is moſt evident from *Heb. 6. 6.* where we read of ſome who were *once enlightned*, yet in a poſſibilitie to *Apoſtatize*, and *fall away*, and that beyond the *renewing to repentance*, ſo conſequently of *ſalvation*. And indeed, *this* illumination is one requiſite in the *unpardonable* ſin, it muſt be after the *knowledge of the truth*, Heb. 10. 26. A man may have his head full of the word of God, and be never the better for it. *Simon Magus* was wrought into an *hiſtorical* belief by the preaching of *Philip*, yet not *ſavingly* profited by it, but ſtil remained in the *gall of bitterneſs*, Acts 8. 13, 23. A man may be *enlightned* to *know*, and to *diſcourſe* of the Word of God, and yet not *ſavingly* profited by it.

IV. Not *barely* to be *affected* and *delighted* with the Word of God. This may ariſe not from the *efficacy* of the Word, but from the *ſublimity* of the truths contained in it. For *truth*, the *more ſublime* it is, the *greater delight* it bringeth with it; but this is neither *ſolid* nor *laſting*: thoſe who receive the *ſeed* into *ſtony* places, were ſuch as *heard and received the word with joy*, but they were but πρόσκαιροι, *Matth.* 13. 20, 21. it *laſted but for a while*. The *night* of perſecution *damps* his joy, and he turns *Apoſtate*. *Ezekiel's* preaching was to the *Jews* as a *well-tun'd inſtrument* in the place fore-quoted; *Herod* heard *John Baptiſt gladly*, Mark 6. 20. Thoſe we ſpake of before, *Heb. 6. 6.* had *taſted of the good word of God*; that is, found ſome *relliſh* and *delight* in it, and of the *heavenly gift*, and the *powers of the world to come*; all which from verſe 9. appear not to be *ſaving* gifts. For the Authour there tells thoſe to whom he wrote, that he hoped *better things of them*, and, *ſuch as accompany ſalvation*; whence it is obvious to collect, that thoſe whom he had mentioned in the fore-going verſes, were not *ſanctifying*, but *common* gifts of the Spirit of God, amongſt which is this light, ſuperficial *taſte*, and *relliſh* of the Word of God, which may ariſe either from our *affection* to the *Preacher*, or from ſome *common work* of the *Spirit* of God. As the *hearers* of *John*, Joh. 5. 35. *rejoyced for a ſeaſon*, yet, verſ. 38. *had not the word abiding in them*.

V. Not *barely* to be *wrought upon* by the Word, to *reform* ſome *groſs* ſin, or to *comply* with a partial, outward, *obedience* unto God; for thus *Herod* when he heard *John Baptiſt* πολλὰ ἐποίει. *Mark* 6. 20. *he did many things*. *Groſs ſins* ſpoil *credit*, croſs *intereſt*, rack *conſcience*; and upon theſe motives a man may forſake them, and yet not *ſavingly* profit by the Word of God. A man may *hear*,

and *practiſe* much of what he hears, the Word powerfully awakening natural conſcience, and ſtirring up, and cloſing with the *dictates* of it, till it comes to ſome *darling-boſome-luſt*; and then the word proves *ineffectual*. *Herod* hears *John Baptiſt gladly*, till he came to his *Herodias*; the *yong-man* brags of an *univerſal* obedience to the *commands* of Chriſt, till he comes to his *covetouſneſs*, and preſcribes him to ſell all. A man may in part be *outwardly* reformed by the Word of God, and yet not *inwardly* renewed, and ſo not *ſavingly* profited. So much *negatively*: I ſhall not lead you far for a *poſitive* reſolution.

The word then profits, when 'tis λόγος σωκεκραμένος, a *mixed word*: that ſpeaks a three-fold reference.

Firſt, To *ſeed*.
Secondly, To *meat*.
Thirdly, To *Phyſick*.

Seed muſt be *mixt* with the *ſoil*, and with the *dew* and *rain* from heaven, or elſe it will not *ſpring*. *Meat* muſt be *mixed* with the *ſtomach*, or elſe it will not *nouriſh*. *Phyſick* muſt *mix* with the *humour*, or elſe it will not *cure*. When, in *analogie* to all theſe, the word is *mixed*, then it may be ſaid *ſavingly* to profit. And firſt as *ſeed*.

I. When the word of God is rooted in the heart. This is the ſeed mixing with the ſoil, it is not ſeed kept in your barn, or granaries, or caſt ſuperficially on the earth, that will grow and increaſe; it is not the word of God ſcattered upon the ear, or laid up in your heads, or in your paper-books; but treaſured up in your hearts which will ſavingly profit, therefore God promiſeth this to his people, *Jer.* 31. 33.

The reaſon why the ſeed thrived not upon the ſtony ground, was becauſe it had no root, Matth. 13. 21. It is but *ſowing* in the *aire*, if the Word takes not *root* in the *heart*: As it is ſaid of *Mary*, ſhe *kept all Chriſts ſayings in her heart*, Luke 2. 51. The *Wiſeman* requires, *Prov.* 2. 1. that we ſhould *hide his commandments with us*. *Clemens*, *pag.* 270. Καθάπερ ἐν γῇ, ſaith *Clemens*, *as ſeed in the earth*, which he calls πνευματικὴ φυτεία, a *ſpirituall ingrafting*; the *graft* muſt be *mixed* with the *ſtock*, if it *thrive*; the *ſeed* with the *earth* if it *ſprings*; the *word* with the *heart*, if it *profits*, as it were *incorporated*.

II. When it *fructifies* in the *life*. As the *ſeed* did in the *good* ground, *Matth.* 13. And this is conſequent upon the former, if it takes root *downward*, it will ſpring *upward*. It is a dangerous *deceit* many are under, who ſatisfie themſelves with a *bare hearing* of the Word, and never look to the *fruit* of it in their *lives*. It may fructifie *diverſly*, as the *good* ſeed did, in ſome an *hundred*, in ſome

ſixty,

ſixty, in ſome *thirty*; but it argues the ſeed *loſt*, if it doth not fructifie in *ſome* meaſure.

III. When *mixed* with the *dew* of heaven. Though the ſeed be *good*, and the husbandman *skilfull* and *laborious*, yet there muſt be *influence* and *dew* of heaven, or elſe no *fruitfulneſs*. The Word may be *good*, the Miniſter *laborious in ſeaſon*, and *out of ſeaſon*. *Paul* may *plant*, but 'tis God muſt *give the increaſe*. *Adjumenta doctrinæ tunc proſunt animæ adhibita per hominem, cùm Deus operatur ut proſint*, is *Auſtin's* Divinity, cap. 16. lib. 4. *De Doctrina Chriſtiana*. The *manna* which deſcended to feed the *Iſraelites*, came down with *dew*; ſo when the dew of Gods grace and bleſſing deſcends with the *manna* of the word. 1 Cor. 3. 6. Exod. 16.

Secondly, As *meat*. I. When it *abides* with us. *Meat* profiteth not, except it be *detain'd* in the *ſtomach*; which is done oft, when the ſtomach is weak, by *mixing* ſomething with it: ſo the Word of God then profits, when 'tis *retain'd* in the *heart*: that will be when *admiſcetur dono fidei*, ſaith *Camero* on the Text. Unbeleif is a *throwing up* of Spiritual nouriſhment again: faith *retains* and *digeſts* it. *Let the word of God*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *dwell in you richly*, *Coloſſians*, 3. 16. Thus the word profited *David*, Pſal. 119. 11. *Thy word*, ſaies he, *have I hid in my heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.*

II. When it *aſſimulates*. So it is in *meat*; Onely with this difference, that the *meat* is *aſſimulated* into the likeneſs of the bodie that *receives it*, and is *nouriſhed by it*: but our *ſouls* muſt be *aſſimulated* to that word which *they receive*, and by which *they* are *ſpiritually nouriſhed*. When we are *delivered* into the *mould*, and *formed* into the *image* of the Word (*Rom.* 6. 17. Εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδαχῆς, *into which you were delivered*) *framed* as *mettal* in a *mould*, into the likeneſs of the Word of God; then we profit by the word; and when, as the Apoſtle ſaith, we *beholding as in a glaſs the mirrour of the Lord*, *are changed into the ſame image from glory*, &c. 2 Cor. 3. 18.

III. When it *nouriſheth*. This is conſequent upon the former, the Word then profits, when it is not onely as an *immortal ſeed* to *beget* us; but a *ſpiritual food* to *nouriſh* us, when as *new-born babes* we grow by the *ſincere milk* of the Word; when we grow in *knowledge* and in *grace*, not onely in *high-flown* notions, and *ecſtatical* raptures, but grow *inwardly*, and *vitally*. To grow in the *head*, while the *vitals* decay, is, you know, the *ſymptome* of a diſeaſe: a Chriſtian then profits, when by the Word he grows more *active* in *faith*, more *fervent* in *charity*, which are the *vitals* of Religion. 1 Pet. 1. 23. Ibid. 2. 2.

Thirdly, As *Phyſick*. I. When it *ſearcheth*. As when *Phyſick mixeth* and meets *with* the *humour*, it *gripes* and puts the *patient*

to pains; ſo the Word of God, when it meets with our *corruption* and *ſearcheth* it, it *gripes* and pains the ſoul. So did *Peters* Sermon, when it met with the particular corruption of the Jews of *crucifying* Chriſt, it *pricked them at the heart*, Acts 2. 37. When *Pauls* diſ-
Acts 24 52. courſe meets with a *Felix's injuſtice* and *intemperance*, it gripes him ſo, that he *trembles*. That *Phyſick* works not *kindly*, which doth not make the *patient* ſick: The Word of God then operates *kindly*, when it makes the *ſoul* ſick of ſin. But this is not enough therefore,

II. When it *purgeth* and *heals*. And to this end, it muſt be *mixed* too. As there muſt be due *ingredients* in every *potion*, ſuitably deſigned for the Cure of each diſeaſe: ſo there muſt be in the Word of God; and this requires much ſpiritual skill in the Miniſter, the *ſpiritual* phyſician. Some are *lethargical* in *ſecurity*, theſe muſt have the *corroſives* of *threatnings*: Others *fainting* in *deſpondencies* & *fears*, theſe muſt have the *cordials* of the *promiſes*: others *paralytical*, *weak* in their *graces*, theſe muſt be brought to the *bath* of the *bloud* of Chriſt to *ſtrengthen* them. There is a *healing* vertue in the Word of God, whence perhaps it is that the Scripture is called, ὑποτύπωσις ὑγιαινόντων λόγων. *the form of ſound Words*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 13. *efficiently*, as *making ſound*, and this muſt be added to the former; for the Word oft *convinceth* where it *converteth* not, (as the moſt obſtinate ſinner ſometimes): The *inciſion's* made, but they run away from the *Phyſitian* before they are *bound up*, and ſo are not *healed*. *Conviction* is no more *converſion*, then *lancing* a wound is the *healing* of it: then *Phyſick* is the *cure*. So you have ſeen briefly what it is *to profit by the Word of God*.

2. *Partic.* Secondly, The *grounds* of unprofitableneſs may be drawn from five heads.

I. The *Preacher*.
II. The *Hearer*. see pag 142
III. The *Word it ſelf*. 170
IIII. *God*. 170
V. *Satan*. 170

From each of theſe we may take an account, why the Word profits not the generality of men.

I. The *Miniſter*. For I think he cannot plead not guilty in this particular. But as *Diogenes*, when he ſaw a *looſe ſcholar* to be beaten, charged the *Maſter*; ſo when we ſee ſo many *unprofitable hearers*, we may in a great meaſure charge and blame the *Preacher*, and that in theſe ten reſpects,

Firſt, Many preach *unſent*; *run* before they have their *errand*; *thruſt* into the office without a *Commiſſion*; and that I confident-

ly

ly affirm to be one reaſon why the Word profits ſo little.

It might ſeem a digreſſion from the Text, but I am ſure not impertinent to the times, if I ſhould enter a diſcourſe of the *neceſsity* of a *lawful call*, in order to the *preaching* of the *word*, and to enquire whether to *preach* without it be not *a neglect* of a *divine ordinance* and *inſtitution*, a *cloſing* with and *gratifying* the *Papiſt* and *Socinian*, a *contradicting* the *univerſal practiſe* of the *Church*, a *violating* the *rule*, of *prudence*, *order*, and *right reaſon*, a *proſtrating* the *authority* and *expoſing* the *function* to *contempt*, and *laying* it *open* to the *preſumption* of every *pretender* to gifts. But I ſhall onely at preſent in all ſubmiſſion propound theſe two *Queries* as to the point in hand, and wholly ſubmit them to your judgement.

1. *Whether he, who preacheth without a lawful call and Commiſsion, can pray in faith for a bleſsing on what he preacheth, as an ordinance of God in reference to the end of preaching, which is Converſion of ſouls?* If he can, he muſt have ſome *promiſe* to ground that *faith* and *prayer* upon, which the Scripture, I dare ſay, affords not; nay, God ſaith the contrary of *thoſe* Prophets, *Jer.* 23. 32. *I ſent them not, nor commanded them, therefore they ſhall not profit this people at all:* and if it be ſaid theſe were *falſe* Prophets who propheſied *lies*, I wiſh it were not the *caſe* of our pretenders, who are generally *broachers* of ſome *groſs* errour; But however it is to be obſerved, that their not profiting is not charged upon the *falſity* of their *Doctrine*, but their *want* of *ſending*, and being *commiſsionated* to the office. An *Embaſſadour* is not like to treat *effectually* on terms of *peace*, if he *neglects* his *Commiſsion:* no more are thoſe who negotiate upon termes of *reconciliation* of *ſinners* to God, who *run* without *ſending*.

2. *Whether for the people to expect profit by ſuch, be not to look for Gods bleſsing out of Gods way?* That Scripture is expreſs *Rom.* 10. 14. where if the Apoſtles gradation were rational it muſt argues a *neceſſary* a dependance of *preaching* upon *ſending*; as of *hearing* upon *preaching*; as of *faith* upon *hearing*, viz. all in an *ordinary* way of Gods diſpenſation. Not to limit God, but that he may work by *extraordinary* means, but for us to expect them, when we may have *ordinary* means according to *divine inſtitution* to patronize encourage *diſorder* in the Church and plainly to tempt God; No *Manna* in *Canaan* where you may *plow* and *ſow:* No depending on *extraordinary* workings (and ſuch muſt the profit by unſent preachers be, if ever it be) where God affords us *ordinary* means of our ſpiritual proficiency.

Till I can ſatiſfie my ſelf in theſe two doubts, I muſt reſolve the *unprofitableneſs* of the Word into the *preaching unſent*. And pardon me if any think otherwiſe here, though I with that learned

Chemnit. in loc. pag. 129. | *Chemnitius* conclude this to be good Divinity, *Eccleſiæ non debent, nec poſſunt cum fructu audire eos, qui non habent legitimæ vocationis teſtimonia.* As you then intend to profit by the word, practiſe our Saviours command, *Matth. 9. 38. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harveſt, that he would ſend labourers into his harveſt.*

Secondly, *The Miniſters neglect of private prayer that the word may profit.* A *duty* cetainly much incumbent on the diſpenſers of the Word of God, in reference to the ſpiritual advantage of the people; for this cauſe *Paul bowed his knee* to God for his *Epheſians.* The hearers *profit* ought to be the Preachers *aim*, which he cannot effect without God; he may *plant*, but 'tis God muſt *give the increaſe.* It is the Lord, *which teacheth* us to profit; and no more *effectual* applications of our ſelves to God, then by *prayer. Paul*, we know, was rapt up into the *third heaven, ut ad Apoſtolatum ſuum inſtructior rediret*, ſaith *Muſculus*: ſo ſhould every *Miniſter*, by *holy meditation* and *devout prayer*, if he will be a profitable preacher of the Goſpel. *Auſtin* tels us, that a *Miniſter may profit more, pietate orationis, quàm oratorum facultate, by the piety of his devotion, then by an affected laborious ſtudied eloquence*: and therefore goes and adviſeth every Miniſter, by *praying* for *himſelf* and *his people*, to be *orator antequam dictor*, to be a *ſollicitor* at the *throne* of *grace*, before an *oratour* in the *pulpit*, that, *priusquàm exerat proferentem linguam, ad Deum elevet ſitientem animam; he ſhould firſt breath the longings of his ſoul in prayer to God, before he vents the meditations of it to the people.* The *fooliſh virgins* lamps went out for want of *oyl*, Matth. 25. *David* calls the Word of God a *lamp*, Pſal. 119. 105. Thoſe that carry this *lamp* to enlighten others, muſt keep it alive by the *oyl* of *devotion.* The neglect of *prayer* is the Miniſters *ſin*, and a prejudice to the *efficacy* of the word he preacheth; as *Samuel* ſaid; 1 Sam. 12. 23. *God forbid that I ſhould ſin againſt the Lord, in ceaſing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way.* You ſee praying and teaching muſt go together.

Ephel. 3. 14. 1 Cor. 3. 6. Lib. 4. de Civ. Dei, cap. 5.

Thirdly, *Many do not preach what for the matter of them can profit*: whileſt neglecting the wholeſome word of God, they elevate the hearer into a ſtupid ignorant *admiration*, *ſoaring* aloft in the *clouds* in high *Platonical* notions, and abſtruſe *Metaphyſical* abſtract ſpeculations, with which they ſtretch their own, and break their *auditories* brain to conceive, which may gratifie an *humour*, pleaſe an *itching ear*, ſatisfie a *nice curioſity*, feed the *phanſie*, but never ſatisfie and nouriſh the ſoul, which comes hungring to the *ordinance.* For ſouls, as *Clement* ſaith, have ἰδίας τροφὰς, their *proper nouriſhment*; you may as well feed *bodies* with *ſhadows*, as ſouls with ſuch lean jejune *notions*: of ſuch ſtuff in a pulpit (for elſewhere I diſpa-

Clemens, pag. 272.

rage

rage it not) I will onely ſay what the ſame Authour ſaith of all the Greek Philoſophie, ὧν καθάπερ τῆς καρύου ὁ τὸ πᾶν ἐδώδιμον, *like a rotten nut*, you may break your teeth in cracking it, and then meet with no kernel, nothing which can ſatisfie, or nouriſh you. The Apoſtle ſpeaks about *ſtriving about words to no profit, but ſubverting the hearers*, 2 Tim. 2. 14. it is the Word of God which is the proper food for ſouls to thrive by; this is a ſpiritual *paradiſe*, the flowers of which have not onely εὐωδίαν, *a gratefull ſavour*, but καρπὸν ψυχῆν τρέφειν δυνάμενον, as *Chryſoſtome* ſaith, *fruit to nouriſh the ſoul*. All other things are but huſks, and this onely the ſolid food. If *Plato* and *Ariſtotle's* Philoſophie and Metaphyſicks can build up a ſoul to heaven, we may ſpare our *bibles*. Hom. 1. p. 2.

Fourthly, *Affectation of popular applauſe and credit*, which puts the preacher upon ſtudying more what may pleaſe, then what may profit. *A doctore glorioſo*, was one of thoſe things which *Luther* was wont to pray God to deliver his Church from, from *vain-glorious preachers*; ſuch as he elſewhere calls *Theologi gloriæ*, and gives this deſcription of them, *dicant malum bonum, & bonum malum, they can call good evil, and evil good*; and then you may eaſily judge how little they are like to profit their hearers. This *affectation* makes many both unfaithfull, and unfruitfull in this office: S. *Paul* oppoſes this to the ſervice of *Chriſt*, as if they were inconſiſtent, *Gal.* 1. 10. Theſe are like unfaithfull *Embaſſadours*, who, when they are commiſſionated to promote their Princes intereſt, they carrie on their own: or like ill *ſpokes-men*, who being ſent to woo for Chriſt, ſpeak for themſelves onely. I ſpeak not againſt *approbation*, as the reſult of the work, (for which God is pleaſed to *crown* the *laborious*, and *encourage* his *faithfull* miniſters) but as the *primarie intention*, or *ultimate end* of the preacher. This is oftenest the ſin of young Divines: how oft ha's this put men upon preaching errour it ſelf, and ſo *poyſoned*, not *profited* their hearers? *Tertullian* mentions it as the policie of *Hereticks*, *neophytos collocare ut gloriâ eos obligent, quia veritate non poſſunt, to promote young upſtarts as the broachers of their Hereſies, that whom truth could not, affectation of vain-glorie might engage*. It is *hard* what I ſay, not *impoßible*, to carrie on the *intereſt* of *ſouls*, and our *applauſe* together. The Apoſtle telling the *Theſſalonians*, 1 Theſ. 2. 8. that he was *affectionately deſirous of them*, he tells you, *verſe* 5, 6. *we uſed not flattering words, nor of men ſought we glory*.

Fifthly, *Ignorance in the diſpencers of the word*: ſuch as the Apoſtle deſcribes, 1 *Tim.* 1. 6, 7. who are *deſirous to be teachers* of others, *underſtanding neither what they ſay, nor whereof they affirm*. Like *Ahimaaz*, will needs be *running* upon the *meſſage*, and yet have 2 Sam. 18. 22

no

Heb.5.12. no *tidings* to carrie to the people, but need ſtill to be taught the *firſt principles of the oracles of God.* It is ſaid, *Mal.* 2. 7. *and they ſhall ſeek law at his mouth*: and ſo they may from too many and never finde it; and this is ſeriouſly to be lamented. I am ſure God complains of it, *Jer.* 2. 8. that *they that handle the law, knew him not.* I ſhall not digreſs to ſhew the *uſefulneſs* of all *knowledge* to a *Miniſter of the Word*: onely as pertinent to my preſent ſubject, ſhew that *ignorance* in the *preacher* muſt needs cauſe *unprofitableneſs* in the *hearer*, for how ſhall he be διδακτικὸν, *apt to teach?* how ſhall he *rightly*

2 Tim.2.15. *divide the Word*, ὀρθοτομεῖν, to give every ſoul his portion? or be able to *ſpeak a word in ſeaſon*: who hath not that εὐκαίρως? or how ſhall he *unfold Gods word to others*, who knows nothing of it himſelf? We (ſaith the Apoſtle) *have the minde of Chriſt*, 1 Cor.2.16. and ſo muſt every *profitable* Miniſter have, and this *ignorance* is ſeriouſly to be lamented in many new *upſtarts* in our daies, who I do not ſay but they may promote a *civil intereſt*, for ſo did *Jeroboam's* Prieſts of the *loweſt of the people*, 1 Kings 13.33. but little like to advance the *intereſt of ſouls*, but a great deal more danger that theſe *blinde* guides ſhould lead the people together with themſelves into the *ditch.*

Sixthly, *Miſcarriage in the Miniſters proviſion and preparations*: which are ſometimes ſo *nice* and *curious*, like ſome diſhes that are made of ſo many ingredients, they rather *nauſeate* then nouriſh: ſometimes ſo careleſs, rude and undigeſted, that they bring a diſrepute upon the Miniſtry and account preaching but, as the *Athenians* did, *vain-babling.* Obſerve S. *Paul's* advice to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 4. 13,15. *Till I come give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine, neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by propheſie, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbyterie. Meditate on theſe things, give thy ſelf wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all*, that is, not onely that whereby he himſelf was encreaſed in his gifts, but rather that by which the Church was edified and profited: *malo de miniſterii effectu interpretari*, ſaith *Calvin.* S. *Auguſtin* would have preachers look rather *quantâ evidentiâ*, then *quantâ eloquentiâ*, *with what evidence they ſpeak more then with what eloquẽce*, and to uſe *diligentem quandam negligentiam*, carefull of their *matter*, but leſs nice of their *expreſsion*, ſo it be apt and ſignificant; *ſic detrahat ornatum, ut ſordes non contrahat*, that they neither too curiouſly affect the dreſs of Rhetorick, ſo that the Auditour onely plays with the diſh, nor yet a ſordid rudeneſs, leſt he *nauſeats* his ſpiritual food: both theſe may cauſe unprofitableneſs in the hearer, though I think an elaborate affected *quaintneſs*, more then a careleſs *plainneſs.* An iron key will unlock what a wedge of gold will not, a

Calv.in loc. *Lib.4.cap.10. de Doctr. Chriſt.*

power-

powerfull plainneſs will open hearts ſooner, then the ſtudied words of mans wiſdome.

Seventhly, *Cowardize of preachers*: which makes them afraid to preach what may moſt probably profit their hearers; which upon ſome carnal intereſt or reſpect durſt not reprove ſin, either to ſecure the friendſhip of ſome great one, or the liking and love of the people, and this puts them upon preaching *ſmooth* things, and *placentia*, ſo *ſowing pillows under mens elbows*, and *dawbing with untempered mortar*. *Nathan* is then like to rouze *David*, when he comes home to him with a *Thou art the man*. You know the like good *Theodoſius* got by *Ambroſe* his ſharp reproof of him, upon which the Emperour profeſſed, Ἀμζέσιον οἶδα μόνον ἐπίσκοπον ἀξίως καλούμενον: that *Ambroſe* onely deſerved the name of a Biſhop: which as it ſpoke the milde Chriſtian temper of the Emperour, ſo the faithfulneſs and courage which becomes a Miniſter of the Goſpel; not to fear the faces of men; but to crie aloud and ſpare not. This was the courage of *Paul*, though a priſoner, to reprove *Felix* of his injuſtice and intemperance: and *John* the *Baptiſt* to tell *Herod* of his *Herodias*. When *Luther* was charged by ſome for too much bitterneſs againſt *Henry* the eight, he made this Apologie, *magnum non eſt, ſi ego Regem terræ mordeo, quando ipſe nihil veritus eſt Regem Cœli blaſphemare*: he thought it below the courage of a Miniſter, to fear to reprove an earthly Prince, who feared not to blaſpheme the King of Heaven. If ever we intend to profit by preaching, we muſt be *inſtant in ſeaſon*, and *out of ſeaſon*, that is (as both *Chryſoſtome* and *Theophylact*) ἐν εἰρήνῃ καὶ ἐν κινδύνοις, in *dangerous*, as well as in *peaceable* times, 2 *Tim.* 4.2. and he tells you how, in the next words, *reprove, rebuke*.

Eighthly, *The unſuitableneſs of the Miniſters gifts*, as to that particular charge he is ſet over. The *miſplacing* of mens gifts and abilities is a very great cauſe of unprofitableneſs. Many men, who for their great learning and exemplarie converſation, might ſeem fit to be *ſhining* lights in the Church of God, yet are not διδακτικοι, as the Apoſtle requires, *apt to teach*, or condiſcend to the capacitie of a meaner auditorie, and ſo great parts oft prove unſerviceable in the Church.

Ninethly, *The want of a holy zeal in the preacher of the word*. A cold preacher makes a careleſs, and ſo conſequently an unprofitable hearer. Every preacher ſhould be an *Apollos*, who was ζέων τῷ πνεύματι, *Acts* 18.25. *fervent in the ſpirit*; and the effect of it was anſwerable, *viz*, the conviction of his obſtinate auditours, *verſe* 28. and as *John Baptiſt* a burning as well as a ſhining light. *Iſaiah's* tongue was *touched* with a *coal from the altar* before he *propheſied*.

1 Sam. 12.7.

Iſa. 6.6.

The Spirit *deſcended* upon the Apoſtles in *fierie tongues*, to enflame them with a *holy zeal*: and preſently after *Peter* converts *three thouſand* at one Sermon, *Acts* 2.41. When the Law was given, the *mount* was on a flame, before the *Trumpet ſounded*; and he that ſounds the ſilver Trumpet of the Goſpel to others, ſhould himſelf be enflamed firſt with a holy zeal and fervour, and this will make him profitable to his hearers: becauſe this holy zeal will put a man upon improving his gifts, and laying out himſelf faithfully for God, and in an earneſt deſire of gaining ſouls, willing with S. *Paul* to *ſpend* or to be *ſpent*; whereas it is as improbable that cold, *luke-warm* preachers ſhould enflame or enliven others, as it is for dead embers to kindle others.

Exod. 19. 18, 19.

Tenthly, *The Miniſters living contrary to his preaching:* this makes his preaching unprofitable. Obſerve what God ſaith, *Pſal.* 50. 16, 17. *Unto the wicked God ſaith, What haſt thou to do to declare my ſtatutes, or that thou ſhouldeſt take my covenant in thy mouth? ſeeing thou hateſt inſtruction, and caſteſt my words behinde thee.* They, who would profit others, muſt *magna vivere* as well as *magna loqui*, ſaith *Eraſmus*, they muſt live as becomes that Goſpel which they preach to others. *Operum copia egregia eſt fandi copia*, ſaith *Auguſtine*: he *preacheth* beſt who *lives* beſt. *Præbeat aliis exemplum, & ſit ejus quaſi copia dicendi forma vivendi*, ſaith the ſame Authour. Let him *exemplifie* his *doctrine* in his *life*, and preach that as *profitably* in his *converſation*, as in the pulpit: otherwiſe he pulls down with his hands, what he builds up with his tongue, and corrupts them more by his practiſe, then profits them by his preaching. In proſecution of this, I ſhall ſay three things.

Lib. 4 *cap.* 29. *de Doctr. Chr.*

I. He may be a powerfull and profitable preacher of the Goſpel upon his repentance and reformation, who hath been guiltie of ſins of a deep die. I ſpeak this to vindicate and aſſert the abſoluteneſs and freedome of God, in making uſe of, and chooſing what inſtruments he pleaſeth. *Paul*, once a blaſphemer and a perſecutour, afterwards *laboured more abundantly* then *all* the reſt of the Apoſtles, 1 *Cor.* 15.10. *Peter* thrice denied his Maſter, yet after his repentance profits three thouſand by one Sermon. *Poteſt fieri, ut quis rectè doceat alios, & ſeipſum non corrigat: ut qui aliis proſit, ſeipſum prætereat.* *Ægidius* gives a reaſon why Chriſt choſe ſome of his Apoſtles out of groſs ſinners; *ut non tam voce, quàm exemplo concionarentur de gratuita remiſſione peccatorum*, that they might not onely preach Chriſt by their doctrine, but be themſelves viſible monuments of the free grace of God. *Matthew*, once a Publican, may upon his return, make an Apoſtle.

Acts 2.41. *Paræus ibid.*

II. It is poſſible that one, who himſelf is not converted, yet may

may be *inſtrumental* to *convert* others. The *word* preached is the *inſtrument* of the Spirit of God, who *blows when and where he liſteth. Malitia Miniſtrorum non derogat efficaciæ miniſterii*, is *Paræus*'s divinitie. God may ſtrike a *right* ſtroke, although with a *crooked* inſtrument. It is not *Paul* that *plants*, but God that *gives the encreaſe*. The word is the *ſword* of the Spirit, it is the *ſpiritual* ſeed; the Spirit may *ſtrike home* with his own *ſword*, though managed, and *proſper* his own *ſeed*, though ſown by a leprous or dirty hand. The carpenters may *build* an ark for *Noah*, and be *drowned* themſelves. The *ſea-mark* may *rot* it ſelf, and yet give others *warning* to avoid *ſhipwrack*. *Judas*, though a *ſon of perdition*, yet *uſed* and *called* as an Apoſtle, *Luk.* 9. 6. *Gifts* and *graces* are two different things: it is heartily to be wiſhed, and carefully to be endeavoured for, that theſe were never ſeparated in the Embaſſadours of the Goſpel: but he who wants *grace* for his own *ſalvation*, may have *gifts* beſtowed upon him for the *edification* of others.

John 3. 8. *Paræus in* Phil. 1, 18.

III. It is not very probable they ſhould, nor can I think they uſually do *ſavingly* profit their hearers. Obſerve what the Prophet ſaith, *Mal.* 2. 6 ſpeaking of *Levi*, *The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.* As it is ſaid of *Barnabas*, *Acts* 11. 24. that he was *a good man*, and *full of the holy Ghoſt*. Whereas he who lives contrary to his preaching, *ſermo multus, nullus fructus*, as *Bernard* ſaith; he may *ſpeak much*, but *profit little*. And that upon a four-fold account.

Lib. 2. *de conſiderat. ad Eugenium.*

1. Becauſe he *proſtitutes* his authority and forfeits his hearers belief of what he preacheth, *Thou that ſayeſt a man ſhould not commit adultery, doſt thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorreſt idols, doſt thou commit ſacriledge*, &c. Rom. 2. 22. As if he ſhould ſay, *It is a ſhame thou ſhouldeſt, and thou ſpendeſt thy breath to little purpoſe if thou doeſt*, With what face and confidence can he appear againſt ſin in the *pulpit*, who countenanceth and patronizeth it in his *life*? Guilt makes men fearful in *reproving* others, and this (though ſeldome acceptable to the hearer) is the moſt profitable way of preaching: *rebuke, exhort*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Tim* 4. 2. *Nihilo plus fidei continent conciones, quàm ſi fabulam in ſcena ageret hiſtrio*, ſaith *Calvin*. A *looſe liver* is oft credited no more in the *pulpit*, then an *actour* upon the *ſtage*, who perſonates a *Prince*, when all the by-ſtanders know he is but a *Begger*; who hath *Jacobs voice*, but *Eſaus hands*; who acts a *double* part, of a *Saint* in the *pulpit*, of a *ſinner* out of it: and does not this juſtly put ſuch an argument as this into the peoples mouths, *If it be true what he ſpeaks, why doth he not practiſe it? If right as he lives, why doth he not preach it?* Thus both his authority and credit

Calv. de ſcandal. pag. 107.

are *forfeited*, and then it is eaſie to judge how little his preaching is like to profit.

2. Becauſe hereby he *expoſeth* his *perſon* and *office* to *contempt* and *ſcorn*. The ſin of *Elie's* ſons cauſed the people to *abhor the offering of the Lord*, 1 Sam. 2. 17. It is not *learning*, or *great preferments*, or a *ſtudied quaintneſs*, or *laborious eloquence*, can uphold the credit or repute of the Miniſters and preaching ſo much as a *ſuitable living* and *converſation*. This raiſeth, even in wicked men oft-time, a reverent and high eſteem of the works of the Miniſtery, and of the *perſon* for the *works* ſake: as it did in *Herod* towards *S. John Baptiſt*, Mark 6. 10. S. *Pauls* counſel to *Timothy* is very obſervable, 1 *Tim.* 4. 12. *Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in converſation, in charity, in ſpirit, in faith, in purity.* An *exemplary life* is a good *preſervative* againſt *contempt*, or at worſt a *ground* of *comfort* under it: whereas an *unſuitable* converſation layes both *office* and *perſon* open to *obloquie* and *diſgrace*. Give me leave to allude to what is ſaid of *Naaman*, 2 *Kings* 5. 1. he was *a great man with his Maſter, and honourable*, he was *alſo a mighty man in valour*, but he was a *leper*: this latter *obſcured* the glorie of his *greatneſs*, and *riches*, and *valour*: ſo when it ſhall be ſaid of a *Miniſter*, he is *learned, judicious, ſolid, quaint, elegant, powerfull*, but *covetous, worldly-minded, idle, looſe, paſſionate*, this ſpoils all; and the former cannot ſo effectually provoke *honour* and *eſteem*, as the latter procure *contempt* and *ſhame*. and if the *perſon* and *office* be laid open to *contempt*, the *doctrine* is little like to *profit*. If the *Phariſees* be *offended* with the *perſon* of Chriſt, they *profit* not by, but *deride* his *doctrine*.

3. Becauſe hereby he *forfeits* thoſe *gifts* by which he ſhould be able to profit by his *preaching*. As he ſinks into *profaneneſs*, ſo alſo into *ſhallowneſs* of *apprehenſion*, *weakneſs* of *judgement*, *ſlipperineſs* of *memory*, *unpruline ſs* of *paſſion*, *prejudice* againſt the *truth*, and the like. Add to this Gods *judicial* with-drawments oftentimes of his *gifts*, and the *knowledge* of his truth from thoſe, who abuſe the one, and *hold the other in unrighteouſneſs*. God, as the Apoſtle tells us, *gives them over* εἰς νοῦν ἀδόκιμον, *to an irrational ſottiſhneſs of minde*. *Holineſs* of *converſation* is the moſt effectual and compendious way to *encreaſe* our *gifts*: *for the ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him*, Pſal. 25. 14. whereas it is not probable, he ſhould *know* much of the minde of God, who wilfully neglects to *practiſe* it. As when it is ſaid of *Elie's* ſons, 1 *Sam.* 2. 12. that they were *ſons of Belial*, there follows, *they knew not the Lord*. Sin *obſcures* the underſtanding, and *corrupts* principles, and *forfeits* our gifts, and then they are little like to profit.

Rom. 1. 28.
John 7. 17.

4. A *bad example* is more prevalent to *corrupt* and *miſlead* men, then

then *good counſel* is to *profit* and *advantage* them. *Suadet loquentis vita, non oratio*; *Life-oratory is the moſt powerfull*: Seneca gives the reaſon, *Homines magis credunt oculis quàm auribus*; *Men believe what they ſee, more then what they hear.* And they who give their *doctrine* the *lie* in their *lives*, are not like to *perſwade* others to *credit* it. When thoſe, whom the Apoſtle exhorts to be τύποι τῆς ποιμνίου, 1 *Pet.* 5.3. the *examples* of the *flock*, lead the ſheep of Chriſt *aſtray* by their *lives*. Obſerve what God chargeth the Prophets of *Jeruſalem* with, *Jer.* 23. 15. *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord concerning the Prophets, Behold, I will feed them with worm-wood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the Prophets of Jeruſalem is profaneneſs gone forth into all the land:* and *Mal.* 2. 8. *Ye are departed out of the way, ye have cauſed many to ſtumble at the Law.* When theſe *ſtars* are *erratick*, no wonder, if thoſe who walk by their guidance *wander*. If the *ſalt* want *ſavour*, no wonder, if the people be not *ſeaſoned* with knowledge and grace. A *godly Miniſter* is a *daily preacher*, while his *life* is a *ſtanding reproof* to *ſin*, and an *argument* of *piety*. *Sermo tuus in exemplo tuo videbitur, ſic non ſolùm præceptor veri, ſed teſtis eris.* It is ſaid of Chriſt, that he was a Prophet, δυνατὸς ἔργῳ καὶ λόγῳ, *Luke* 24. 19. *mighty in deed as well as in word.* S. *Paul*, who ſo oft exhorts other to *mortification*, brings his *own body into ſubjection*, and *himſelf runs*, as an *example* to provoke his *Corinthians* ſo to *run that they might obtain*, 1 Cor. 9. 24, 25, 26, 27. *How beautifull are the feet of thoſe, that preach the Goſpel of peace?* Rom. 10. 15. Their *feet*, their *walking*, not their *tongues* onely, their *ſpeaking*. I ſhall end this with *Pauls* advice to *Timothy*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 16. *Take heed to thy ſelf, and unto thy doctrine.* We muſt do both, as ever we expect *ſavingly* to profit either *our ſelves*, or *them that hear us*. I ſhall end all with a double Application:

Seneca. ep. 6.

Senec. ep. 20.

Firſt, To the *Miniſters*, that they ſhould endeavour ſo to *preach*, that they may *profit*; not barely that they might *pleaſe*: for *delectare ſuavitatis, docere neceſſitatis*, ſaith *Auſtine*: *neceſſity* is laid upon you, yea *woe* too, if you preach it not to profit by it.

Lib. 4. *c.* 12. *de doct. Chriſt.* 1 Cor. 9. 16.

Preach to profit.

I. In conformitie to the *examples* of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, that ye may *write* after their *copy*, Chriſt came not to *ſeek his own glory*, John 8. 50. and, *I receive not honour from men*, ſaith he, *John* 5. 41. Chriſt makes it the *badge* of a *falſe prophet*, to *ſeek himſelf* and *his own glory*, John 7. 18. Chriſt's *meſſage* and *work* was *to call ſinners to repentance*, *to ſeek* & to *ſave what was loſt*, to *binde up broken hearts*, to *proclaim liberty to the captives*, and *the opening the priſon to them that are bound*: And the Apoſtles *trod* in their Maſters *ſteps*: take the one example of S. *Paul*, who *laboured more abundantly*

Matth. 9. 13. Iſa. 6. 1.

dantly then all the reſt of the Apoſtles, and all to the *profit* of the *Churches*: *I have kept back nothing, which might be profitable to you*, ſaith he to the Church of *Epheſus*, Acts 20.20. he was *affectionately deſirous* of his *Theſſalonians*: and he tells his *Corinthians*, more then once, of this, that he was *made all things to all men, that he might ſave ſome*; that he did not *ſeek his own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be ſaved*; and again, *I ſeek not yours but you*: The *care* he had of the *Churches*, he reckons as the *greateſt* of his labours: and to name no more, how deſirous was he of the good of the *Philippians*, that he could *rejoyce* in *being offered as a ſacrifice upon the ſervice of their faith*, *Phil.* 2. 17.

1 Theſſ.2.8.
1 Cor.9.22.
1 Cor.10.33
2 Cor.12.14
2 Cor.11.28

II. To *gain* and *uphold* the repute of *preaching* and the *miniſters* in the *hearts* of the people. Nothing doth this more effectually, then *plain* and *profitable* preaching. The Apoſtle ſpeakes to this fully, 1 *Cor.* 14. 25. *Learned preaching* may beget ſuch an *admiration* in the people, as they may cry you up for a *Scholar*; and *quaint preaching* may get you the *elogiums* of an *oratour*; but of the *powerfull* and *convicting* preaching of a Chriſtian, they will ſay *God is in you of a truth*: though ſuch is the *ingratitude* of *many* in *theſe* days, that they are ready to *caſt durt* in the *face* of that miniſtery, by which, unleſs wilfully blinde, they cannot but *obſerve* thouſands, and *confeſs* themſelves, if at all, *profited* and *converted*.

1 Cor.14.25

III. Becauſe this is the *very deſigne* of your *office*: the *end* of your *miniſterial gifts* and *abilities*. *The manifeſtation of the ſpirit is given to every man to profit withall.* 1 Cor. 12. 7. And the Apoſtle ſpeaking of *theſe* gifts, which Chriſt, *when he aſcended*, gave to the *Paſtours* of his Church, *Epheſ.* 4. 8, 11. tells you the *uſe* and *end* of them, verſe 12, it is, *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the miniſtery, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt*. And S. *Paul* tells his *Corinthians* that *his authority was given him for edification*. 2 *Cor.* 10. 8. Thoſe *titles*, whereby Scripture ſets out the *Miniſters* and their *office*, ſpeak this. They are *embaſſadours*; 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. that engages them to *negotiate* the peoples reconciliation to God: *Angels*, *Rev.* 1. 20. and you know they are *miniſtring ſpirits* ſent forth to *Miniſter* for them that ſhall be *heirs*, *Heb.* 1. 14. *builders*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 10. that ſpeaks their duty to *edifie* the people in *faith* and *knowledge*: *ſtewards*, *Titus* 1. 2. and therefore it is their duty, to *diſtribute* what they are intruſted with for the good of the *family* of God the *houſhold of faith*: *nurſes*, 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 7. and ſo muſt *give* out the *ſincere milk* of the word whereby the children of God may *grow*: *ſtars*, *Revel.* 2. and therefore muſt *ſhine* for the benefit of others, eſpecially in this night of ignorance and Atheiſme. For us then not to aim at profiting by our preaching is to abuſe the *gifts* of God to another

ther end then that for which God gave us them.

IV. For *your own comfort*, both here and hereafter. It will be your comfort upon a *death-bed*, when conſcienc ſhall teſtifie to the ſinceritie of your deſires of profiting the people of God. It muſt be ſad ſurely, at ſuch a time, for any of us to reflect upon our unfaithfulneſs in this office: when conſcience ſhall tell us to our faces, *we* aſcended the pulpit, more to pleaſe a fancie, or promote a partie, or to advance our ſelves, then to profit or ſave ſouls. On the contrarie, a faithfull diſcharge of our office, will be then comfortable: this was the matter of S. *Paul's* rejoycing, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. for the accompliſhment of which he eſtemed his *life* not *dear* to him, *Acts* 20.24. and ſo indeed he did, for when he was readie to be *offered*, this was his *comfort*, 2 Tim.4. 6,7. *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand: I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith.*

V. Becauſe your *reward* will be certain and great, *Dan.* 12. 3. One of thoſe three *aureola's* which the Schoolmen ſpeak of, by which they mean ſome *additional acceſsions* to the *eſſential happineſs* of Saints, they aſſign to the Doctors of the Church: and Scripture ſpeaks of a Prophets reward, *Matth.* 10.41. as exceeding the reward of a *righteous man*, with which the Apoſtle *Peter* encourageth the elders in their dutie, 1 *Pet.* 5.2,4. You ſee then how good ground there is for this promiſe, and if you would preach to profit, you muſt preach,

1. *Conſtantly*, in *ſeaſon*, and *out of ſeaſon*, 2 Tim.4.2. eſpecially conſidering we are fallen into thoſe times the Apoſtle there foretold, and uſeth as an argument of *Timothie's* diligence, *v.*3,4. The *worſe* the *times*, the more errours abound, the greater ought our zeal and diligence in the Miniſtrie to be. We muſt not onely as the *high-prieſt* under the Law, go into the *Sanctum Sanctorum* once in a year; preach a Sermon, which ſmells of the lamp, now and then, but we muſt be *inſtant*, *attending to doctrine*, and *continue* in it. 1 Tim.4.13. Chriſt enjoyned it thrice to *Peter* to *feed his lambs*, and his *ſheep*, *John* 31.16. If each Miniſter wrote after S. *Paul's* copie, *Acts* 20. 20, 21. many might be kept cloſe to that *truth*, from which of late they are *apoſtatized*, and reap more profit by the Word of God.

2. *Condeſcendingly, ſuitably to the capacitie of thoſe who are to hear*: nothing more eaſie, then to excuſe the vulgar with an affected height of eloquence and learning; *quæ quicquid non intelligit plus miratur*, as *Hierom* ſaith: who are wont highly to admire, what they do not at all underſtand: but this will never ſavingly profit them. *If I come unto you ſpeaking with tongues, what ſhall I profit you?*

you? ſaith S. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 14.6. and *v.* 4. that is *powerfully and plainly.* This was our Saviours practiſe by familiar parables to ſtoop to the capacitie of his hearers, *Mark* 4. 33. and I know not whom we may better imitate; in this we muſt, if we aim at profiting by our preaching.

Secondly, To the *hearers:* that they would endeavour ſo to hear, that they may profit. For your thriving under means and profiting by preaching of the Goſpel, will be,

I. A *credit* to the Goſpel, as proclaiming to the world that the Goſpel is more then a *mere notion,* and that there is a *power, virtue,* and *efficacie* in it: while mens unprofitableneſs opens the mouths of the enemies of that Goſpel to charge it as a *humane invention* and *policie* to keep men in aw and ſubjection: but when they ſhall ſee the Goſpel having *a powerfull influence* upon your hearts and lives, they will preſently conclude it to be the *power of God unto ſalvation,* as S. *Paul* tells his *Theſſalonians,* 1 Theſ. 1. 4.

II. The *joy of Angels,* Luke 15.7. *I ſay unto you likewiſe, joy ſhall be in heaven over one ſinner that repenteth, more then over ninetie and nine juſt perſons, that need not repentance.* And the means of that is the Word preached, compared to the *grain* of *muſtard-ſeed,* Mat. 13.31. if you take it down, it will make you weep, as *Peter's* Sermon did the Jews.

III. The *advantage and comfort of your Paſtor and Miniſter. I have no greater joy then to hear that my children walk in the truth,* ſaith *John* to his beloved *Caius,* 3 *John* v. 4. What comfort and joy muſt it needs be to a faithfull Miniſter, to be able to ſay, *Behold, I and the children that God hath given me,* Heb. 2. 13. When he ſhall *ſee of the travel of his ſoul and be ſatisfied.* When with S. *Paul* he can ſay, *Such have I begotten in Chriſt through the Goſpel,* 1 Cor. 4. 15. S. *Paul* calls his *converted Philippians* his *crown* and his *joy,* Phil. 4. 1. and his *Theſſalonians* his *glorie* and his *joy,* 1 *Theſ.* 2. 20. and as it is his *joy* here, ſo it will be his *comfort* at the laſt day: upon which account the Apoſtle urgeth this upon his *Philippians,* c. 2. v. 16. *holding forth the word of life, that I may rejoyce in the day of Chriſt that I have not run in vain. holding forth*] viz. *in their lives;* and upon the *Hebrews,* 13.17. Your profiting by the Word will ſeveral waies be the Miniſters advantage; I'le but hint.

1. As a *teſtimonie* to the *lawfulneſs,* and *evidence* of the power of his preaching: and at once a credit both to the Embaſſadour, and his meſſage, the preacher and his Goſpel. The converted *Corinthians* were the Apoſtles *commendatorie Epiſtles* to ſet off the worth and efficacie of his Apoſtleſhip, 2 *Cor.* 3. 1, 2. and he tells them 1 *Cor.* 9.2. *the ſeal of my Apoſtleſhip are ye in the Lord:* as if he had ſaid,

ſaid, *your converſion is as undoubted an evidence of the truth of mine Apoſtleſhip, as a Princes ſeal added to letters patent to commiſſionate an Embaſſadour.*

2. As a *ſecuritie* and *encouragement* to encreaſe thoſe gifts by which he may profit. When a Miniſter ſees no iſſue of his prayers and Sermons of many reſtleſs nights, and wearie daies; how does it diſcourage him in his labours? and while you are *careleſs* to profit, he proves idle in his ſtudie, and negligent to improve his gifts, which conſequently muſt ruſt and decay. An unprofitable hearer oft makes a cold, careleſs, dull preacher, and beſides, God for your unprofitableneſs, may withdraw his aſſiſtance and gifts, and *drie up* the *breaſt* for your neglect of the *ſincere milk* of the Word.

3. As that which *ſweetens all his enjoyments*. A large revenue, a great living, a fair repute, a fulneſs of outward accomodations, ſatisfie not a faithfull Miniſter, while the people remain unprofitable, that he ſees not the fruit of his labours.

4. It is *your own concernment and intereſt*. For it is ſad if the Word preached profits you not: for if not *this*, probably *nothing* elſe will: as *Abraham* told *Dives*, ſoliciting for one to be ſent from the *dead* to his brethren. If the Word profits you not the caſe is deſperate. You had better never have heard of the Word, a *Turk* and an *Indian* will come off better then you at the *laſt day*, Mat. 10. 14, 15. It will be ſad for *Capernaum*, *exalted up to heaven* in the enjoyment of the word and ordinances at that day, for not *profiting* by them, to be *thrown down to hell*: ſo for thoſe unbelieving Jews here, to whom the Goſpel was preached as well as to us, but *the word did not profit them.* Luke 16, 31.

Hebr. 4. 2.

The word preached did not profit them.

II. Sermon.

The ſecond ground of not profiting by the word preached is in reſpect of *hearers*.

Firſt, *A careleſs, negligent non-attendance to the word preached:* when mens thoughts are not gathered up, but *roving*, their eyes *gazing* about, their ears not *fixed* upon the word of God; when they bring their *bodies* hither as ſo many *carcaſſes*, but their *ſouls* are elſwhere. The *covetous mans* ſoul is *locked* up in his *cheſt* at home, and there idolizing in his thoughts his *Mammon of unrighteouſneſs*, while he ſhould be ſerving God in the Temple; the *voluptuous Gallant* comes there for *faſhion*, in the mean time his thoughts are taken up with the *neweſt faſhion*, or perhaps with his *hawks* and *hounds*; the *ambitious man*, while taking a *nap* at Church, *dreams* of *honours* and *preferments:* ſo that we may ſay as *Seneca* did of the Philoſophers ſchools, *Magnam hanc auditorum partem videbis, cui Philoſophi ſchola diverſorium otii ſit.* Many make the Church a *meeting-place* of *idleneſs:* indeed God complains of this himſelf, *Ezek.* 33. 31. *They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they ſit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them, for with their mouth they ſhew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs:* their *thoughts* are *wandring* in the world, while their *bodies* are *confined* to the Church. And this *non-attendance* is much to be lamented, that many whom you ſhall obſerve with a conſtant unweariedneſs attentive to a ballad, idle tale, or at a ſtage-play, at an hours Sermon and preaching of the word of God are tired, dull, heavy, drowſie, and unattentive; ſo that we may lay it to the charge of our Auditours, that *Demoſthenes* reproves the *Athenians* for; that when he made an Oration *de Aſini umbra*, they were all very attentive to hear him; but making another *de ſalute Græciæ*, they all deſerted him. Many can lend an eare to a tale, a fable, or Romance, who are negligent and non-attendant upon the word of God: and this muſt needs prove unprofitable upon a double account.

Senec. ep. 108.

Baldwin. Caſ. Con.

I. It is ſo in the acquiring of all other knowledge, if he that learns regards not what is read unto him (as ſuppoſe a ſcholar his Tutours lectures, or an apprentice his maſters directions) he is not like to profit by them; ſo it is in getting wiſdome by the word of God:

God: if we would profit by it, we muſt be ſuch as the Auditours were in *Luke* 19.47,48. of whom it is ſaid, *they were very attentive to hear him.*

II. When God comes by his Spirit to make the word *effectual* to any ſoul, he raiſeth it to an holy and careful *attention* to the word preached. This is moſt evident in that pregnant place, Act.16.14. concerning *Lydia, whoſe heart the Lord opened, that ſhe attended to the things ſpoken by Paul:* and how oft does our Saviour provoke the attention of his Auditours by this expreſſion, *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear?* You muſt bring an holy *attention* of body, and *intention* of minde, if ever you intend *ſavingly* to profit by the word of God: as it is ſaid of thoſe in *Acts* 8.6. *They gave heed unto thoſe things which Philip ſpake.*

Secondly, *The propoſall of wrong ends in hearing*: the generality of hearers do not propound to themſelves thoſe ends, for which God hath appointed the preaching of the word; ſuch are the *inlightning, ſtrengthning, comforting, quickning, convincing* of ſouls; and upon ſearch it will be found, but a few come for thoſe ends. Some come into the Church, as if a man ſhould go into an *Apothecaries* ſhop, (not for a medicine to *cure* them, that were well, but) for a *Recipe* to ſleep; I call to witneſs the drowſineſs, and lazineſs of many. Others are *Athenian* Auditours, come onely to *hear ſomething that is new.* Others out of *cuſtome*; becauſe others do, and themſelves have been accuſtomed to it. Others out of *faſhion*, more then *devotion.* Others come to *contradict* and *oppoſe*, as the *Jews* did *Paul*, Acts 13.45. Others, not as they ſhould do, willing to *be judged* by the word of God, but to *judge* it, and the preacher for it; which make the *pulpit*, not a *tribunal* before which they ſhould be judged, but a *bar* before which the preacher muſt be cited, cenſured, and judged; theſe come to pick a hole in the preachers coat, not out of a conſcience of their dutie in hearing and obeying the word of God. Others come out of affectation of eloquence, as a man goes to an Oration or Comedy, and then it is no wonder, that whiles he catches at the ſhadow of Rhetorick (as the dog in the fable) he looſes his ſpiritual food, the *bread of life.* Theſe are like the *proud Greeks*, which ſeek after wiſdome, to whom the *preaching of the Goſpel* ſeems but *fooliſhneſs.* Others come perhaps to promote their intereſt in the world, like thoſe hearers of our Saviour, *John 6.* that followed him for the *loaves.* Others come onely to hear, not to learn or practiſe. *Sicut in theatrum voluptatis cauſâ, ad delectandas aures*, as *Seneca* ſpeaks of ſome, who came to hear *Lectures* of Philoſophy; *Non id agunt, ut aliqua vitia deponant, ut aliquam legem vitæ accipiant, mores ſuos exigant; ſed ut oblectamen-*

Acts 17.21.

1 Cor. 1.13.

Seneca ep. 108.

Clem. pag. 272

Col. 3. 2.

ctamento aurium perfruantur; Aliqui & cum pugillaribus veniunt, non ut res accipiant, ſed verba, &c. Others come with their *table-books*, which, though good, is not ſufficient. Others to ſee, and to be ſeen, Ὥσπερ ἐπὶ πόλεων τὰ οἰκοδομήματα, as *Clemens* expreſſes it; as Gallants flock to a city, not for any buſineſs they have there, but to ſee the ſtately buildings, and to be ſeen themſelves: and when men come for ſuch ends as theſe, it is no wonder that they go away without any profit. You ſhould come, if you intend to profit, as *Naaman* did to *Jordan*, to have your *leproſie* cleanſed, that you go away from it, as *Seneca* would have men from the hearing of Philoſophy. *aut ſaniores, aut ſanabiliores*; or as the *impotent* perſons at the *pool*, John 5. that you may be *put in*, and *healed*, and *ſtrengthned*: come as to that word, which hath Gods εὐδοκίαν upon it, in 1 Cor. 1. 21. and that in order to your ſalvation. But you will ſay, *If men come for theſe ends, were it not better that they ſtay away?* I anſwer, No, it is ſinfull to come thus in the *circumſtance*; but it is ſinfull in *genere actûs* to neglect coming. However come, though out of *curioſity*, ſo did S. *Auſtin* to hear S. *Ambroſe*, yet was catcht by it: though perhaps to *ſleep* (as old Father *Latimer* ſaid) *God may take you napping*: though to *oppoſe* and *deride* the preacher, ſo did the *Jews*, Acts 2. 13. charge the Apoſtles as *drunkards*; yet of them three thouſand were *added* to the Church. The *net* of the Goſpel is ſpread, and thou mayſt be *caught*, though thou intendeſt it not. As he that comes into the *Sun*, though he intends it not, may be *warmed*. *Qui in unguentaria taberna reſederunt, & paulò diutiùs commorati ſunt, odorem ſecum loci ferunt*, ſayes *Seneca*: ſo while you ſtay out a Sermon, ſome ſavour of goodneſs may reſt upon you, though perhaps you intend nothing leſs: if thou comeſt for theſe ends, thou mayſt, though it is unlikely thou ſhouldeſt, profit.

Thirdly, *Worldly-mindedneſs*: This much hinders the profiting of the word of God. Our Saviour tells you this expreſſely in the parable of the *Sower*, Mark 4. 10. ἡ ἀπάτη τοῦ πλούτου: there is a deceitfulneſs in the world to draw our hearts from the word of God; and that three wayes.

I. As it *alienates the affections of men from the word of God*. They whoſe deſires run after, and whoſe love is fixed upon the world, muſt needs have the one dearer, the other cold to the word of God, *You cannot*, ſaith our Saviour, *ſerve God and Mammon*, Matth. 6. 24. The heart cannot be ſet upon both treaſures at once, no more then can one eye be lifted up to heaven, and the other caſt down upon the earth, at the ſame time. It was the *farm*, and *oxen*, that diſaffected thoſe from the *Supper*, to which they were *invited*, Luk. 16. 14, and therefore the Apoſtle exhorts, *Set your affections on things above*,

above, and not on things on the earth: you cannot do both together: and S. *John, Love not the world, nor the things of the world; if any one love the world, the love of the Father is not in him:* and if not the *love of the Father*, there is like to be little affection to the Word of God. Our Saviour expreſſes this, by *ſowing among thorns*, Matth. 13.24. *Wordly cares* are *thorns* (as in many other, ſo eſpecially) in this reſpect; that as thorns eat out the heart of the earth, where the ſeed is ſown; ſo do the cares of the world the deſires of the ſoul towards the word of God; *Nummus illis magis reſonat, quàm verba divina*, ſaith *Ambroſe*. John 2.15. *Ambr. ſerm. 8. in Pſal. 119.*

II. As it *prejudices them againſt the word preached*, that they ſhut their eares againſt it, and will by no means entertain it: the *Pſalmiſt* compares the *wicked* to the *deaf adder*, Pſal. 58. 4, 5. *Auguſtin* upon that place tells us how the adder does it; *allidet unam aurem terræ, & de cauda obturat alteram:* thus, when men have their hearts laid upon the world, it is no wonder, that they are *deaf* to the word of God: *clauſas aures habent & ſono æris obtuſas*, ſaies *Ambroſe*, *the ſound of their riches, deafens them to the word of God.* A worldly mans heart muſt needs be full of prejudices againſt the word, and the great doctrine of it, *ſelf-denyal, taking up the croſs*, and *parting with all for Chriſt*: upon hearing of theſe doctrines, they are ready to ſay, *This is an hard ſaying, who can bear it.* This was that which prejudiced the Jews againſt *Ezekiel's* preaching, *Ezek.* 33. 31. that though they were convinced of the truth of it, and brought into a liking of it, yet they did not profit by it: becauſe *their hearts went after their covetouſneſs.* This prejudiced *Demetrius* and others againſt the Goſpel, as in *Acts* 19.27. ſo thoſe againſt *Paul* and *Silas*, Acts 16.19. The word of God does moſt hardly take place in a *covetous mans* heart.

III. *This worldly-mindedneſs oft makes Apoſtates from the word of God:* the *young man* in the Goſpel heard Chriſt, and pretended an univerſal compliance to his commands, *Matth* 29. 21. but *covetouſneſs* lay at the bottome, and therefore, when Chriſt preſcribed his *parting with all*, he apoſtatizes from his former profeſſion. This made *Demas* leave *Paul*, 2 *Tit.* 4. 10 While mens hearts are ſet upon the world, and their thoughts wholly taken up with earthly things, they grow into a diſaffection of the word of God, and the preaching of it: and when any danger for the words ſake appears, they fall from it: yea, notwithſtanding that ſeeming joy and delight they entertain'd it with. This is moſt evident in the parable of the *ſeed* which fell on the *ſtony* ground, *Matth.* 13. 20. If therefore you would profit, when you come to hear the word, you muſt lay aſide, not onely your *worldly employments*, but your *earthly thoughts*

and *deſires*, which otherwiſe will *choke* the word of God. When *Abraham* went in obedience to the command of God to *ſacrifice* his ſon, he left his *ſervants*, and his *Aſs* behinde him, *Geneſ.* 22. 5. *nè impediretur*, ſaith *Paræus:* ſo ſhould we all our *earthly thoughts* and *deſignes*, when in obedience to the precept of God, we come to hear the word: that our hearts be emptied of theſe cares, *nè intus exiſtens*, &c. And we finde *worldly-mindedneſs* called by the Apoſtle *the root of all evil*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 10. the root of this, amongſt the reſt, *unprofitableneſs*. Therefore it is obſerved, there were fewer *Apoſtates* in the Primitive times becauſe then there was little worldly advantage to tempt and ſolicite them from the Goſpel.

Fourthly, *Neglect of prayer.* I ſhewed you before the Miniſters engagement to pray for the people: in 1 *Sam.* 12. now I ſhall ſhew you the neglect of this duty in the people is a great cauſe of this unprofitableneſs. You are to pray therefore,

I. *That God would open the Miniſters mouth*: this S. *Paul* oft puts thoſe upon, to whom he wrote, as the *Epheſians*, cap. 6. ver. 18, 19 and the *Coloſſians*, cap. 4. ver. 2, 3. both for *inward gifts*, and *abilities*, & the *outward exerciſe* of them: from which place we may note, 1. That there can be no profiting without a *door of utterance*: 2. That God muſt open it, as he did for *Moſes*, who was of *ſlow ſpeech*, *Exod.* 4. 10, 11, 12. Εἰς ὁ διδάσκαλος καὶ τῆς λόγου καὶ τῆς ἀκροαμένου, ὁ ἐπιπνέων καὶ τὸν νοῦν, καὶ τὸν λόγον· ſo *Clemens Alexandrinus*. God is the onely teacher of us to *ſpeak*, and of you to *profit:* He muſt *open* our *mouths* and your *hearts*, as he did the *heart* of *Lydia*, and the *word* to both, before it can profit. So God ſaies in regard of the people *Eſay.* 48. 17. and ſo Chriſt promiſes to his miniſters *Luk.* 21. 15. 3. Prayer is the *key* to open this *door* of *utterance*, to *reveal* the *ſecret cabinet* of Gods will and word: *Knock, and it ſhall be opened* is Chriſts promiſe in *Matth* 7. you muſt *knock* by *prayer* at the *gate* of heaven, that this *door of utterance* may be opened to the Miniſter: S. *Paul* mentions this to his *Corinthians*, 2 Cor. 1. 11.

II. *That God would open your hearts*: God muſt do both, or neither will be done, *Acts.* 16. 14. S. *Paul* prayes for his *Epheſians*, chap. 1. ver. 17, 18. and *David* for himſelf, *Pſal.* 119. 18. *Cathedram habet in cælo qui corda docet*, ſaies S. *Auguſtin.* You may open your *eares* to the word of God, and all the while your *hearts* may be ſhut againſt it, unleſs God open that. As our Saviour ſpake to his diſciples; *Having eares hear you not?* &c. ſo it will be with every one, whoſe heart God doth not open: the Miniſter may bring the Word to the eare, but it is the ſpirit onely, can carry it effectually to the heart: *Prov.* 20. 12. *The hearing eare, and the ſeeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them.* God muſt not onely give thee the Word,

Lib. 4. *cap.* 16. *de Doct. Chriſt.*

word, but an eye to ſee it, and a heart to embrace it: as it is ſaid of Chriſts preaching to his two diſciples, *Luc.* 24. 45. *Then opened he their underſtandings, that they might underſtand the Scriptures.* The ſumme of it is, *Prayer* is the means to open the Miniſters mouth to ſpeak, and your hearts to entertain the word ſo, as to profit by it; and therefore neglect of this muſt needs cauſe unprofitableneſs. The *Wiſeman* directs you to this courſe, as in *Prov.* 2.2,3,4,5,6. It is the Lord onely that gives it, and if you would have it from him, you muſt crie after it: *If any of you lack wiſdome, you muſt ask it of God*, James 1.5. How deeply are moſt men to be charged here? I accuſe none of you: but I wiſh you to deal faithfully with your ſelves. How ſeldome do you pray ſeriouſly to God, before you come here? Have you this morning been upon your knees, earneſtly begging of God for the Miniſters, and your ſelves? if not, no wonder if you go away, as you come; charge it upon your ſelves (quarrel not with God, his Ordinances, or his Miniſters) as the cauſe of your unfruitfulneſs; if you come without praying, I do not wonder, that you go away without profiting.

Fifthly, *Pride*; *when men come with proud hearts to the preaching of the word:* they are more ready to ſcorn and oppoſe the word, then to profit by it.

This hinders,

I. *Pride of our own righteouſneſs.* When men are puffed up with a conceit of that, they diſcover not their want of the word of God, and ſo undervalue and ſleight it: this was the reaſon, why our Saviours preaching wrought ſo little upon the Phariſees, as you may ſee *John* 39. 40. they were not *convinced* of their *blindneſs* and *ſin*, but lifted up with an opinion of their *own holineſs*: ſo it was with the Jews too, *Rom.* 10.3. If ever we intend to profit by the word, we muſt come emptied of our *own righteouſneſs*, and breathing after the righteouſneſs of Chriſt held forth in the Goſpel. An *humble*, though notorious ſinner will profit more at the word, then a *proud* ſelf-juſtitiarie: as the Publicans did at the preaching of our Saviour, more then the Phariſees.

II. *Pride of our own knowledge:* this makes men think that conſtant preaching of the word is needleſs: we ſhall hear nothing, but what we have heard before; we know it as well as the preacher can tell us: this is the pride of mens hearts. It was the *Athenians* pride of their *Philoſophical notions*, which made them eſteem *Paul's* preaching as a *vain babling*, Acts 17. As ſome proud ſcholars think themſelves beyond their Tutours reading: ſo many are too goodly to be taught. High *Seraphical* ſouls, that are lifted up a-

bove

bove ordinances; that pretend to ſuch growth, that they can live without this ſpiritual food: there is *pride of heart* at the bottom of all. In heaven we ſhall live immediately upon God; but here mediately by his ordinances: there we ſhall ſee *face to face*, but here in the *glaſs of the word*: and if we deſire to profit by it, we muſt bring an humble frame of ſpirit. *Jobs* language would become us well, *Job* 34.32. *That which I ſee not, teach thou me*: wait at wiſdomes gates for further diſcoveries, for here we know but in *part*, and ſee nothing but *darkly*: the beſt of us had need daily of eye-ſalve from Chriſt to have our *eyes opened* by the word: we muſt become ſenſible of our ignorance, and in this become *fools*, that we may be *wiſe*: this pride muſt needs make the word unprofitable upon a three fold account.

Acts 26.18.

1. It makes men *untractable*, and *unteachable*. A proud heart is apt to ſet up many carnal reaſonings, and proud imaginations, which exalt themſelves againſt the word: thoſe ὀχυρώματα in 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. whereby they quarrel with the truth of God, as *Nicodemus*, when our Saviour preached to him of *regeneration*, he was as at his, *How can this thing be?* *John* 3. It was this pride made the Greeks count the Goſpel *fooliſhneſs*, 1 *Cor.* 1.23. This pride makes men deſpiſe the word, and they think it a kinde of puſillanimitie of ſpirit to ſubmit to it: *who is the Lord?* ſaith proud *Pharaoh*, Exod. 5. 2. and thereupon rejects all his meſſages by *Moſes*: ſo thoſe proud Jews in *Jeremiah*. *Clemens Alexandrinus* ſaies, *The word is not to be ſubmitted to the judgement of thoſe, who are not yet humbled, but have their minds pre-occupied and prejudiced by proud carnal reaſonings.* Obſerve what the *Pſalmiſt* ſaies, *Pſal.* 10.4. *God is not in the thoughts of his heart.* The proud will not ſeek after God, that is, in his ordinances; he thinks it needleſs, or elſe below him: the proud *Phariſees* were of all other men the moſt untractable of Chriſt's doctrine.

Jerem. 44.16

2. Becauſe pride makes men *unwilling to hear what may moſt profit*. A proud heart cannot endure to hear his *particular* ſins, his *darling* corruptions ſtruck at, or diſcovered by the word of God. A *particular* reproof of ſin, is certainly the moſt *profitable*, 2 Tim. 4. 2. and this a proud heart cannot endure. If Chriſt reproves the *Phariſees* hypocriſie, they are enraged againſt him, and plot his death. *Herod* muſt not endure to hear of his *Herodias*: ſee *Prov.* 1. 25. where it is ſaid, *Ye ſet at nought all my counſel, and would none of my reproof*: theſe were *proud ſcorners* at the 22. *verſe*, and you may eaſily judge, how little like theſe are to profit. He is not like to have his wound *healed*, that cannot endure to have it *ſearched*.

3. Becauſe

3. Becauſe *God will have nothing to do with ſuch in his Ordinances.* He *gives more grace to the humble, but reſiſts the proud*, James 4. 6. God is his enemy. God, as I may ſay, every Sabbath keeps *open houſe*; every one may come, but, believe it, a *proud* heart is like to go away without his alms. *He fills the hungry with good things, but ſends the rich emptie away*, Luke 1. 53. and we finde at *Iſaiah* 66. 5. that God ſpeaks *comfort* to ſuch as *tremble at his word*, not that *ſcoff* at it, and *ſleight* it, as a *proud* heart doth. God pours the oyl of grace and knowledge into emptie veſſels: and therefore, as you deſire to profit by the word preached, ſo labour for an humble frame of ſpirit. It is ſaid by the *Wiſeman*, Prov. 11. 2. *with the lowly is wiſdome:* and to this end I ſhall ſuggeſt onely three notes.

I. This is the proper qualification of ſcholars in any ſcience. Nothing hinders knowledge more then pride: this was intimated in the poſture, which ſcholars amongſt the Jews were wont to uſe, *viz.* to ſit at their Maſter's feet: ſo we finde it *Acts* 22. 3. as an expreſſion of *humilitie*. It is *Philo's* obſervation, that when the *Eſſens* came into the Synagogue, each ſcholar, according to their ſtanding, was wont to ſit at their Maſters feet: this expreſſion ſpeaks *aptneſs* to learn, and alſo a *modeſt humility*. *Quòd ſi hæc reverentia terrenis præceptoribus debetur, quantò magis nos ad Chriſti pedes jacere convenit, ut ex cœleſti ſolio loquenti dociles nos præſtemus*, ſaies *Calvin*. We read of *Mary*, Luke 10. 39. that *ſhe ſate at Jeſus feet and heard his word*: upon which ſaies S. *Auguſtine*, *Quantò humilior ad pedes Domini ſedebat Maria, tantò amplius capiebat*. We muſt caſt our ſelves at the feet of Chriſt in his Ordinances, if we will be his ſcholars. It is ſaid that the people *ſtood at the feet of the mount*, when the *Law* was given, *Exod.* 19. 17. ſo muſt we ſit at the feet of Chriſt, when the Goſpel is preached.

Calv. in locum

II. This *humilitie* will make us *teachable* by the word of God. An *humble heart* is like *melted wax*, which is fit to receive the *impreſſion* of the word of God, and willing to be moulded, and faſhioned according to it. An *humble heart* trembles at the *threatnings*, and ſo is like to profit. God will dwell with ſuch, *Iſaiah* 66. 2. It cloſes with the commands of it: as *Cornelius* ſaid to *Peter*, Acts 10. 33. *We are all here preſent, to hear all that is commanded of God:* and *David* tells us, that he *will hear what God ſpeaks*, Pſal. 85. 8. It ſubmits to the reproofes of the word of God; it accounts of them as precious oyl: whereas a proud heart holds up againſt the threatnings, ſlights the commands, and rages againſt the reproofs of the word of God. That place of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Jerem. 13. 15. is full and worth our obſervation. *Hear ye, and give ear, be not proud: for the Lord hath ſpoken:* as if he had ſaid, *If you con-*

Pſal. 141. 5.

tinue in your pride, you will never give an ear to the word of God. But,

III. To make all ſure, an *humble heart* ſhall have the Spirit of God for its teacher, and then ſuch ſhall be *effectually* and *profitably* taught: *the humble he will teach*, Pſal. 25.8,9. it ſhall have the Spirit to *lead into all truth*, *John* 16. 13. The more *humble*, the more of the *teachings* of God. It is ſaid, that *the Spirit deſcended upon Chriſt in the form of a dove*: the *dove* is a meek creature, to teach us, that the diſcoveries of the Spirit are made to *humble* hearts.

Sixthly, The ſixth ground is *carnal reaſonings*, and *prejudices* in the hearts of men, which pre-poſſeſſing the ſoul, make the word ineffectual: which *prejudices*, while they remain, obſtruct the ſoul againſt the word of God: theſe are as ſo many bolts upon the doors of our hearts, that the word can get no entrance; theſe are naturally in every one of our hearts: and they are of two ſorts.

I. Againſt the *word* it ſelf.

II. Againſt the *preacher* of it.

I ſhall diſcover and remove ſome of them.

I. Againſt the *word* it ſelf, which although it be admirable in it ſelf, and appointed for moſt excellent ends by God, yet are many *prejudices* againſt it in mens hearts: as

1. *The meanneſs of this* Ordinance, *and ſeeming outward inconſiderableneſs of ſome hours ſpeaking*, which makes many to diſeſteem it: whence the Apoſtle calls it the *fooliſhneſs of preaching*, 1 Cor. 1.21. becauſe moſt men are apt to judge it ſo. The ground of this *prejudice* is mens *non-attendance* to the authoritie of God's inſtitution: as if a man ſhould conſider the *matter*, not the *ſtamp* of the coyn, which may make baſer mettals currant: we ſhould attend to Gods ἐυσρία upon it, which makes it valuable; as the *diamond* in a ring makes the ring much more precious; and as the ſeal upon a ſcedule, which makes it effectual to the purpoſes contained in it: ſo is it the inſtitution of God, that makes this Ordinance ſo worthy and conſiderable; and if we would profit by the word, we muſt remove this *prejudice* againſt the word for the *means* of it in it ſelf, and come to it, as Gods *inſtitution*, and in obedience to his command, and then are you like to thrive and profit by it. The Apoſtle gives you this, as an account of the *Theſſalonians* thriving under the Goſpel: that they *received the word, not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God*, 1 Theſ. 2.13. and this made it to *work effectually* in their hearts.

2. The *pre-poſſeſſion of ſome politick opinion*, it may be, in compliance of ſome *great ones*, and the ſtrain of the *times*; hence the word of

of God finds no entrance: much truth is *ſtifled* upon this account, becauſe it will not comply with mens *politick* concernments, and the opinions they have taken up in compliance with their *outward* advantages; when truth comes to croſs theſe, then it is rejected. This is no new thing, it was ſo in our Saviours time amongſt the *chief Rulers*, *John* 12.42. and with the *chief Prieſts* and *Phariſees*, *John* 11.48. and upon this account both Chriſt, and his doctrine was rejected; and hence it is ſaid, that *the great ones received it not*, *John* 7. 48. Thus many make truth to ſtoop and vail to politick deſigns; and this makes the word of God ineffectual. *Ahab* would not make reſtitution of *Naboth's* vineyard, becauſe it would not ſtand with his *intereſt*: thus doctrines do oft ebbe and flow upon politick conſiderations, and and the *truth* is loſt in the world.

3. *All is done by the Spirit, the Word is but a dead letter: may we not therefore better expect the whiſpers of it, then to be tyed to a conſtant attendance upon the word preached?* As if the impotent people *John* 5. ſhould have argued, *we cannot be healed unleſs we be put in, therefore we will not lie at the pool*: nay, they knew but one of them could be healed at a time, and yet all lay expecting. Is it in *vain* to *ſow* your ſeed, becauſe you can have no *crop* without the *influence* of heaven? ſo no *ſowing* the ſeed of the word, becauſe no *thriving* without the Spirit? It is ſaid, *James* 1. 18. *Of his own will begat he us of the word of truth.* The word is Gods, yet we are begotten by the word. So S. *Paul* tells his *Corinthians*, *In Chriſt Jeſus I have begotten you through the Goſpel*, 1 Cor. 4. 15. Becauſe the hand writes, is the pen therefore needleſs? The *Corinthians* were S. *Pauls epiſtle*, written by the finger of the Spirit, and Saint *Pauls* preaching too, 2 *Corinth.* 3. 3. The Sun *enlightens*, but by a *medium*: the Spirit *begets* and *regenerates*, but by the *word*: as in 1 *Pet.* 1. 23, 24.

4. *I have alreadie profited by the word, and therefore I have no further need of it. The Apoſtle commands indeed, that we ſhould attend upon the preaching of the word, but no longer, then till the day-ſtar ariſe in our hearts*, 2 Pet. 1. 19. *and I finde that alreadie in thoſe appearances of Chriſt to my ſoul, and theſe ſpiritual illuminations I have communicated unto me, therefore I am diſobliged from any further attendance upon the word.* In the removing of this ſcruple, I deſire theſe particulars may be conſidered.

I. Thy *former experience* of the efficiencie and power of the word will, if they have been true, *ſweeten* the word more to thee, *raiſe up* thy eſteem of it, *revive* thy delight in it, and *engage* thee in a further, and more *chearfull* attendance upon it. I beſeech you, con-

ſider that pregnant place of the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 2.2,3. *As new born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby. If ſo be ye have taſted that the Lord is gracious.* A *true* taſte will *ſharpen* our appetites, as a childe that hath taſted the *breaſt*, is ſtill longing and crying after it, and can hardly be *weaned* from it; ſo it will be with every true childe of God, who hath *reliſhed* this *ſincere milk* of the word: he gets a ſtomach by eating. Indeed a man may have a *light*, *ſuperficial* taſte of the word, and apoſtatize, as in *Heb.* 6.6. and that is ſad: but a *real* experience of the power and ſweetneſs of it moſt effectually quickens deſires after it. So it did in *David*, Pſal. 63.1,2. He had *ſeen*, and therefore *deſires to ſee*. As it fared with *Jonathan*, 1 Sam. 14.27. *Mine eyes have been enlightned, becauſe I taſted a little of this honey:* ſo it is with Chriſtians, who have taſted the ſweetneſs of the word, they are *enlightned* to ſee the excellencie, and deſirableneſs of it, which quickens their deſires after it: as in *Pſal.* 34.8. *taſte that you may ſee.* It is the want of *taſte* and experience, which hinders men from the ſight of the excellencie and deſirableneſs of it. I ſhould ſuſpect that man never to have profited by the word, who himſelf pretends ſo to have profited by the word, as to be juſtly exempted from any further attendance upon it.

II. We will charitably ſuppoſe it to be true, *that thou haſt been converted by the word preached:* but art thou ſo perfect all on a ſuddain, that thou needeſt no *furtherances* and *additions* of further degrees? What? becauſe thou art *born again*, is therefore the *ſincere milk* needleſs, by which thou ſhouldeſt grow? *Thou profeſſeſt the truth*, well; but doeſt thou not need to be *confirmed* by the word preached? It was the Apoſtles work to *confirm the ſouls of the diſciples*, Acts 14.22. and ſurely moſt needfull in theſe unſteadie, unſettled, wavering, and apoſtatizing times, when many who have *profeſſed highly*, have *apoſtatized fouly*. *Be your knowledge true*, it is but *imperfect*, for we know but *in part*, and therefore you ſtill need the word to be a *light* and a *lamp* to you: *your affections ſanctified*, but perhaps are *dull* and *heavie*, they need the word to quicken and enflame them, as Chriſt did his diſciples, *Luke* 24.32. *Thou art at the higheſt pitch of thy attainments*: why? Chriſt hath given Paſtours *for the perfecting of the Saints*, Epheſ. 4.12. or, *if thy graces thrive and grow*, ſtill thy *comforts* may be but weak and languiſhing; therefore, thou ſtill needeſt the word to quicken and ſtrengthen them; for God creates the *fruit of the lips, peace*. They are not ſenſible of their *imperfection* ſure, who feel not the *want* of a *conſtant* ſupply of the word of God. The meat of *one day*, will not ſerve you for a *week*: and ſurely you do not pray onely for bodily,

but

but ſpiritual food, when you ſay, *Lord give us this day our daily bread.* The Iſraelites gathered their *Manna* in the wilderneſs *daily*, and not *once for all*; if laid up, it putrified: while we are in our pilgrimage, we muſt daily gather the *Manna* of the word of God to nouriſh us, till we come to our heavenly Canaan, and then we ſhall not need it. *Naaman* waſhed ſeven times in *Jordan* before his leproſie was cleanſed: ſome of the old leproſie of ſin cleaves to the beſt, and we muſt be *continually* waſhing in the waters of the *ſanctuarie*: and *Bleſſed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates*, &c. *Prov.*8.34.

III. As to the *Scripture* pleaded in *Peter*, it is neceſſary to obſerve, that the word ἕως, *untill*, doth not denote the *term* of time, but as *Beza* notes on *Matth.* 1.25. *tempus interjectum ſimpliciter denotat*; it aſſerts the *preſent*, but denies not the *future* time, as Scripture affords us many inſtances: as *Matth.* 28.20. *I am with you unto the end of the world.* What, no longer? Yes, it will be their happineſs to enioy him to eternity. So *Matth.* 22.44. *Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footſtool*: But ſhall Chriſt ſit there no longer? Yes ſurely. So here, *untill* notes the *end* of the word, not the *term* of time for our attendance. We muſt attend *ſo long*, but it doth not ſay, *then no longer uſe of it.* The *Enthuſiaſts* uſe this place to favour their neglect of the word; for by the *day-ſtar*, they would underſtand *extraordinary immediate revelations:* ſo by the προφητικὸν λόγον: but it is evident, the Apoſtle meant the ſame with that προφητικὰ γραφῆς, verſ. 20. as oppoſed to thoſe σεσοφισμένοις μύθοις, verſ. 16. ſuch are theſe pretended *Enthuſiaſmes.* But, 2 Pet.1.19.

IV. *Attend to the word preached till that time, and then you ſhall be exempted:* but I pray miſtake not, it will not be till you come to heaven; then onely φωσφόρος ἀνατείλῃ, *the day-ſtar will fully appear in your hearts.* The Apoſtle here ſeems to me to oppoſe *this* and the *other* world. While we are here in *this* world, we are but in αὐχμηρῷ τόπῳ, and therefore need to attend to the word ὡς λύχνῳ *as to a light* to guide us: but in the *other* world, Chriſt as our φωσφόρος ſhall *ariſe* with an *immediate* and *clear light* upon our ſouls. When we ſhall not need the *medium* of *Ordinances*; but ſhall ſee God *face to face*; then ſhall that ἡμέρα *dawn*, that the Apoſtle ſpeaks of; then they ſhall arrive at heaven, where they ſhall have no *need* of the *candle* of *Ordinances*, nor the *Sun*, but the *Lamb* ſhall *give them light*, Apoc.22.5. So long as the beſt of us are on this ſide heaven, we have but λύχνου φαίνοντος, and that in a *dark place.* Indeed we have a clearer light ſhining now, then was in the Old Teſtament; but if compared with the light we ſhall enjoy in heaven, it is but ἐν αὐχμηρῷ τόπῳ, in a *dark place:* and thus learned and judicious *Calvin* in

terprets the words. *Ego hanc caliginem, cujus Petrus meminit ad totum vitæ ſtadium extendo, ac diem tunc demum nobis illucere interpretor, cùm facie ad faciem videbimus quod nunc cernimus per ſpeculum & in ænigmate.* It is true that the *Sun of righteouſneſs* does *ſhine* in the Goſpel, and by that into our hearts; but in the greateſt *communication* of *light*, there is a *mixture* of ſome *darkneſs*. We are in the body but as in *ergaſtulo*, as in a *priſon*, though ſome light come in by the *craneys*, yet more darkneſs remains upon us. Then ſhall the day fully appear, when all *clouds* of *ignorance* and *errour* ſhall be *ſcattered*, and the full riſing of the *Sun of righteouſneſs* be upon us. Here *Calvin* obſerveth, *Nos tantundem abſumus à pleno die, quantum à perfectione fides noſtra abeſt:* our *light* here is but *dim*, our *faith* but *imperfect*; therefore while we live in the world, we ſhall want the lamp of the word to guide us; without which we walk but in darkneſs. They *live upon death it ſelf*, as *Clemens* elegantly, *and ſee no more then one wrapt up in thickeſt darkneſs of the moſt obſcure night*. The full appearances of God are in heaven, here he manifeſts himſelf by his word, and to expect other ways of diſcoverie is but to tempt God. *Attend then to the word of propheſie till the day-ſtar ariſeth*, that is, till you come to ſee God face to face, and then no uſe of *Ordinances*; in the interim attend upon it, as the ordinary inſtituted means of your ſpiritual proficiencie. Content your ſelves with this *manna*, while you are in the wilderneſs, and then you ſhall eat of the *milk* and *honey* of that heavenly *Canaan* which is above.

5. *I enjoy God in my private retirements, and live immediately upon God; and is not this a happy anticipation of heaven?* Yes, too happy for any one to enjoy on this ſide heaven. It was above the *eſtate* of man in *innocency*, to whom then there where *means* and *Ordinances* appointed, as the *Tree of life*, which ſome aſſert as a *means* of preſerving that immortality, in which he was created: but all agree about it, as a *Sacramental ſign* of that eternity, which he ſhould have enjoyed in happineſs upon performance of obedience, which God required. Our enjoyment of God here is in and by the *Ordinances:* we *ſee the power & glory of God in the Sanctuary*, as it is *Pſal.*63.2. an immediate viſion is a reſerve for heaven. Here God is to be ſeen as *revealed* in the word, there we ſhall ſee him, as he *is*: here in a *glaſs*, there *face to face:* here enjoyed in *prayer*, *hearing* and other *duties*, which are our ſpirituall converſes with God, there in an *immediate viſion* and *fruition*. And this I take to be the meaning of that expreſſion in 1 *Cor.* 15. 28. *That God may be All in All:* when as it is ſaid ver. 24. that *then cometh the end, when he ſhall have delivered up the kingdome of God:* viz. as to the manner of *Adminiſtration* by

by the *preaching* of the word, and other *Ordinances*: then there ſhall be none of theſe, for that fruition of God immediately ſhall be in ſtead of them all.

6. And laſtly, *I have attended long, many years upon the word preached, and I finde no profit: therefore it is in vain to attend any longer.* I confeſs the *non-proficiency* of ſo many under means is a great diſcouragement both to *Miniſter* and *people*. S. *Paul* was inclined to be diſcouraged upon this account as appears by Acts 18. comparing the 6, the 9, and 10. verſes together: and to the *people*, as if their fields ſhould *yearly* be *ſown*, & yet remain *barren*, it would much diſcourage them to ſow them again: therefore give me leave to ſpeak a word or two to each.

I. To the *Miniſter*. Haſt thou preached long, and no profit appears in thy people? Firſt, *mourn in ſecret* for it: *water* the word with thy *tears*: thus did Chriſt over Jeruſalem, whom he had oft diſcovered himſelf to, and preached, Luk. 19. 41. Peter *wept himſelf* before he *converted others*. Secondly, *pray much that it may profit*: you may profit more *pietate orationum quàm oratorum facultate*, ſaith S. *Auguſtin*: a *praying* Miniſter will profit more then an *eloquent* oratour. Thirdly, *reform thy ſelf*: perhaps thy ſin may hinder the efficacy of the word, and the ſeed may not *thrive*, becauſe thou ſoweſt it with a *leprous* hand. Obſerve what Chriſt ſaith to *Peter*, Luk. 22. 32. *When thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren*: and when thou art converted thy ſelf, it is like that thou maieſt profit more by thy preaching. But, Fourthly, *by no means give over*: the peoples neglect of theirs, cannot exempt thee from thy duty. *Wo be to me, if I preach not*, ſaith S. *Paul*, and whether the people will hear, or whether they will forbear, we muſt preach: for, 1. *thy word may profit afterward*, we muſt not limit God, but attend our duty: when *Elias* was ſo much *diſcouraged*, God had ſeven thouſand reſerved: ſo when *Paul* was *diſheartned*, God encourages him with this, *I have much people in this city*, Acts 18. 10. It is an excellent ſaying of *Seneca*, *An profecturus ſim neſcio: malo mihi ſucceſſum deeſſe quàm fidem*. It is better for us to be *unſucceſſive*, then *diſobedient*. It is not for us to know the times and ſeaſons, which God hath reſerved. The *huſbandman* ſowes his *ſeed*, though he can give himſelf no aſſurance of a *crop*: which *Metaphor* the Apoſtle leads us unto Jam. 5. 7. he does not ſow and reap both in a day. 2. *The ſincerity of your obedience and endeavour will however be acceptable unto God*, as *Abrahams* was in offering his ſon, though the event followed not, therefore in Gods account he did it, *Hebr.* 11. 17. God in his accepts the *will* for the *deed*, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. which is a ſpecial ground of comfort to Chriſtians in every calling and employment. But, 3. thy *reward*

Seneca ep. 25.

reward ſhall be ſecured, Eſay. 49. 5. God rewards not onely our ſucceſs, but our faithfulneſs. S. *Paul* would have the *Philippians* to *hold forth the word of life, that he might rejoyce in the day of Chriſt, that he might not ſeem to have run in vain, nor laboured in vain*: and indeed the Miniſters of the Goſpel may ſeem to labour in vain, in reſpect of the *efficacy* of their Miniſtery, but certainly it ſhall not be in reſpect of the *reward* of it.

II. To the *people*. It is ſerious matter of lamentation, that the Miniſters ſhould have occaſion to complain with the Prophet, *Eſay* 8. 18. *Behold, I and the children, whom the Lord hath given me, are for ſigns and wonders in Iſrael*; that is, becauſe they were ſo few and rare: and that they ſhould have occaſion to complain with the ſame Prophet, *Eſa.* 53. *Who hath believed our report?* And it is ſad for you, *Brethren*, if it be any of your caſe: if it be, *mourn* over it, and *pray* againſt it, as the Prophet *David*, Pſal. 119. 18. *Open mine eyes that I may ſee into the wonders of thy Law:* and withall obſerve with me;

1. *God doth not expect equal proficiency from all*: as a *Maſter*, or *Tutour* doth not of all *ſcholars*, whom yet he may approve and commend for their diligence. This I ſpeak for the *comfort* of thoſe Chriſtians, who are the moſt conſcientious *waiters* on the *Ordinances*, yet complain they profit not anſwerably. The *good* ground in Matth. 13. 23. did not bring forth equally, but ſome *thirty*, ſome *ſixty*, and ſome an *hundred*: *fruitfull* fields bring forth *unequal* crops; ſo it is poſſible, that among thoſe who conſcionably attend on the *Ordinances*, ſome may profit more then others.

2. *Thy proficiencie may not appear preſently*: as oft we are in deſpair of our fields, yet afterwards receive a good crop. In the night of temptation, or the like, the word may be obſcured, and not appear, but may afterward ſhew it ſelf to the comfort of thy ſelf, and rejoycing of others.

3. *Perhaps thou profiteſt more in thy actions, then thy knowledge.* They are not alwayes the beſt proficients in the word, who declare moſt, and know beſt; if thy affections be enflamed towards the word, and thou beeſt carefully conſcientious to practiſe ſuitably to thy knowledge, thou haſt profited more then your *notional high-flown profeſſours*, which yet are *cold* and *careleſs*.

4. *Be ſtill conſtant in thy attendance upon the word.* This is thy *ſeed-time*, therefore practiſe the *Wiſemans* advice, which he gives, *Eccleſ.* 11. 6. *In the morning ſow thy ſeed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand.* The *good* ground brought forth fruit, ἐν ὑπομονῇ, *Luk.* 8. 15. that is, *though perſecuted for the word*: or elſe though *no preſent crop*, or *preſent profit*. We read of the *impotent* perſons, John 5. 3.

5. 3. that they lay at the *pool*, though they were not preſently put in: and amongſt them *there was a man there, who had an infirmitie thirty eight years*, at verſ. 5. ἔκπληξ & ὑπομονή, as *Chryſoſtome* obſerves, *ſtupendious patience:* and ſpeaking in that *Homily* on *John* 5. of the admirable patient waiting of that impotent perſon, he adds, Ἡμεῖς δ' ἐὰν δύο ἡμέρας περιεδρεύσωμεν ἀνυδρίαις οὐδὲ πρὸς ὀφθαλμοῦς, καὶ μὴ τύχωμεν, ὀκνοῦμεν: *we grow cold and remiſs after a ſmall time of waiting.* He lay thirty eight years, yet not healed, and yet did he not give over *waiting:* ſo ſhould we at this ſpiritual *Betheſda*, to be cured of our ſpiritual infirmities: though ſome of you may have lien as long *unprofitably* at the Ordinances, as he *unhealed* at the *pool*, yet wait ſtill, the time may come, and will be: *Who among you will hearken for the time to come?* Eſa. 42. 23. *Improve* that thou haſt already received, and wait on God for an *encreaſe* in his own way, and thou art under a promiſe to receive it: for *Habenti dabitur*, Matth. 25. 29.

Secondly, Prejudices againſt the *Preacher*; and theſe are either,

I. Againſt his *Perſon*. We are offended at the *meanneſs* of it, he is a man *like our ſelves*, or elſe we are diſ-affected to him, and both theſe cauſe unprofitableneſs under the word preached, as it did in our Saviours auditours, *Matth.* 13. 55, 57. The *Phariſees* were offended at the *perſon* of Chriſt, and ſo rejected his *doctrine*. *Ahab* hates *Micaiah*, the Prophet of the Lord, and therefore refuſed to enquire of him, 1 *Kings* 22. 8. This ſinfull reſpect of perſons, hinders the efficacie of the word, as it oft begets diſ-affections in the heart of people towards the ableſt *Miniſters*. Theſe come not to hear the *word*, but the *man*: till you eſteem the *perſon*, you will hardly profit by his *doctrine*. I plead not for a ſuperſtitious reverence of their perſons; but as the Apoſtle, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 13. I deſire that they may be *eſteemed very highly for their works ſake*. Theſe *prejudices* are oft times cauſeleſs, ariſing from our own corruptions, either becauſe we are too apt to *entertain reports* againſt them, contrary to the Apoſtles rule, in 1 *Tim.* 5. 19. or elſe *affectation of novelty* diſ-affects us to them; or *want of charity* to cover their failings; but pry into their *faults* and *failings*, though they be but the *ſpots* of Gods children. This is moſt irrational, if we did but ſeriouſly conſider, that the efficacie of the word depends not upon the Miniſter. *Peter* at one Sermon in *Acts* 2. converted more, then Chriſt did in all his time for ought we read. We ſhould not diſ-affect the *meſſage* for the *meſſenger*, but rather eſteem the *meſſenger* for the *meſſage* ſake: we ſhould minde the *pearl* that is brought us, more then the *hand* that brings it.

II. Againſt his *gifts*: *I would hear him, but his gifts are mean and ſmall.* I could heartily wiſh, that there were not too great

ground of this prejudice and complaint at this day, when we have ſo many of *Jeroboams* Prieſts, every one that will, as in 2 *Sam.* 1.20. *Tell it not in Gath, publiſh it not in the ſtreets of Askalon.* I dare ſay, ſome triumph at it; but for *duly-conſtituted* Miniſters, if faithfull, though of leſſer abilities, let me ſuggeſt,

1. *Variety of gifts are for your good and advantage*, as the holy Apoſtle tells us, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. whether elegant *Apollos*, or profound *Paul*, or ſolid *Cephas*; all are for your good. Obſerve diligently that full and pregnant place in 1 *Cor.* 12. from ver. 7. to ver. 12. One interprets *ſolidly*, another reaſons *profoundly*, a third applies *powerfully*, a fourth wins *affectionately*, and another demonſtrates *cunningly*, and all to thy *profit*. There are two things ſuggeſted which may help to unprejudice us in this particular: 1. the *freedome of the Spirit*, in diſtributing theſe gifts, at verſ. 11. and therefore we muſt not quarrel with the wiſdome of God in it. 2. the *end*, for which God hath deſigned this variety, viz. our *profit*, at verſ. 7. there are not the *meaneſt* gifts, but an *humble ſelf-denying* Chriſtian may make uſe of, and profit by.

2. *This prejudice reflects diſhonourably upon God, and takes his glory and gives it to the inſtruments.* God will have the glory of his *power* and *mercy* to be magnified; and therefore ſometimes uſes the *meaneſt* gifts to the *greateſt* ends. As this advanced his glory at the firſt, that the Goſpel ſhould be propounded by ſuch *inconſiderable* perſons, as a few *fiſher-men*. God conſulted his *glory*, when he put this heavenly treaſure in *earthen* veſſels, 2 *Cor.* 4. 7. Look not on *glittering* of the *ſword*, but to the hand that *weilds* it: look up from men to God, as S. *Peter* ſpake to the men of Iſrael, *Act.* 3. 12. concerning the cure wrought upon the lame man: *Why gaze ye on us, it was not we but God.* God often uſes feeble inſtruments, that himſelf may have the *greater* glory; and layes aſide great parts, when men begin to glory too much in them. The ſame truth is preached by all, and the *Spirit bloweth where he liſteth.* John 3. 8.

3. *Perhaps he denies his abilities for thy good.* He could be *Seraphicall*, and in the *clouds*, but he *ſtoops* and *deſcends* to thy *capacity*; and *denies* himſelf, that he may *gain* thee. S. *Paul* was wrapt up into the *third heaven*, and could ſpeak with *tongues more then all*, 1 *Cor.* 14. 18. and yet deſired to *ſpeak rather to edification.* Judge *charitably*; it is likely the Miniſter denyes his excellency, as deſirous that thou ſhouldſt be brought in love with the *naked* truth of the Goſpel, and not with the *dreſſe* it comes in, that the Goſpel may come by its own power and efficacy upon thy ſoul, therefore he ſtudies a *familiar plainneſs.*

4. *The abler thy Preacher is, if thou profit not ſo much the more by him,*

him, the greater will be thy condemnation. Satisfie not thy ſelf therefore with this, that thou *liveſt* under *an able Miniſter* (men may affect this more for their credit, then aiming thereby at their profit) nor let this exalt thee in *contempt* of others, thy account will be the *greater*; and if thou profiteſt not ſo much the more, very ſad. How ſad will it be for *Jeruſalem*, who had Chriſt preaching amongſt them, yet *refuſed* and *rejected* him: and thoſe, againſt whom the Apoſtles *ſhaked* of the *duſt* of their *feet*, for the not-entertaining of the Goſpel: and for you, *Brethren*, who enjoy as much of Goſpel-light as ever appeared upon the world, if you ſhall be found *unprofitable* at that day, when many, who have lived under leſs means, ſhall be found improved ſuitable to the means they lived under, and ſo conſequently *rewarded*, and you, who have been under the *richeſt dews* of heaven, be found *unfruitfull*, you ſhall be diſpatched with the *unprofitable* ſervant, *Matth.* 25. 30. *Take you, and caſt the unprofitable ſervant into outer darkneſs, there ſhal be weeping, and gnaſhing of teeth.* Away then with theſe *prejudices*, which muſt needs make the word unprofitable: while one quarrels with the *method*, another with the *expreſsion*, a third with the *matter*, a fourth with the *delivery*, the word is like to profit little.

Seventhly, The ſeventh ground is *hardneſs of heart.* That *natural* hardneſs, which is in every one of us, much hinders the working of the word of God in us: that heart of ſtone reſiſts the divine impreſſions of the word; and therefore, God when he promiſes to write his *Law in our hearts*, he firſt promiſes to take away *this heart of ſtone*, Ezek. 36. 26, 27. One thing in the ſtonie heart is *impenitrableneſs*, and this makes men *threatning-proof*, and *judgement-proof*: they *tremble* not at the one, nor are *broken* by the other. And this eſpecially, when the ſoul comes to be *hardned* by cuſtome in ſin: the *ſeed*, you know, which fell on this ground, *periſhed.* Hardned *Pharaoh* ſlighted all *Moſes's* meſſages, and remains hard under varietie of Gods judgements, both *threatned* and *inflicted.* Obſerve the exhortation of the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 3. 13. *To day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*; as if he had ſaid, *If once your heart be hardned, it will be to little purpoſe to exhort.* A *hard* heart may be moved by the word of God, but ſtill remain, and afterward grow more obdurate. *Pharaoh* is a ſad example, whom every meſſage of God *hardned* more. As *rain* may *wet* a *ſtone* outwardly, but ſtill it retains it's innate hardneſs; ſo it is poſſible, a hard *heart* may ſeem outwardly to melt into ſome tears, the effect, perhaps, of a mans natural temper and conſtitution, yet remain hard and unbroken: as it was with thoſe in the Prophet, *Jerem.* 5. 3. *Thou haſt ſmitten them, yet they have not grieved*, &c. Notwithſtanding the

varietie of Gods *providences*, & the Prophets ſolicitations to return, they remained hard. The Scripture calls this πνεῦμα κατανύξεως, *Rom.* 11. 8. *the ſpirit of ſlumber*; ſo deep and dead a ſlumber, that the *threatnings* of the word cannot *raiſe*, or *awaken* them out of it: ἀπηλγηκότες, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the *Epheſians*, in *chap.* 4. 19. they *feel* no *impreſſions* of the word upon them: nay, it makes them to rage againſt it, as the *Jews* did, *Acts* 7. 51. *Ye do alwaies reſiſt the holy Ghoſt*; that is, ſpeaking by the Prophets and Apoſtles, as appears, *verſe* 32. The *hard* earth muſt be broken up, e're your ſeed will thrive in it: ſo muſt the *hard* heart, that the ſeed of Gods word may take *rooting* in it. The word is the inſtrument of the Spirit to break up the heart; and therefore compared to a *hammer* that *breaks the rock in pieces*, Jerem. 23. 29. and till this be done, there can be no profiting by the word. *Joſiah* was of a tender heart, and ſo *melted* at the word of God, in 2 *Chron.* 34. 27. ſo muſt all be, who intend ſavingly to profit by the *word*. There is indeed a *hardneſs* of heart, which excludes all poſſibilitie of *profiting* by the *word*: I mean, when God ſeals up men *judicially* under unprofitableneſs for their former *reſiſting* and *oppoſing* the *word* of God. Of which I underſtand that place, *John* 12. 40. *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardned their heart, that they ſhould not ſee*, &c. This was *Pharaoh's* caſe, when he had hardned himſelf, God at laſt hardned him ſo, that he refuſed the meſſages of God to him by *Moſes*, till he was utterly ruined; when mens conſciences, as the Apoſtle ſaith, are *cauterized and ſeared*; they grow *inſenſible* under the *word of God*, and the *ſhinings of the Goſpel*, (as the *Sun* the *clay*) more hardens them: as it fared with the *Jews*, Ezek. 2. 4. for all his oft ſpeaking unto them, *they were impudent*, or, as it is in the margin, *Hard of face*.

Eighthly, The eighth ground is *unbelief*. This the Apoſtle adjoyns in the Text, as the cauſe of the *Jews unprofitableneſs*, becauſe it was not *mixed with faith*, and truely this muſt needs cauſe *unprofitableneſs*, both becauſe we cannot draw near to God in his Ordinances without this. *Unbelief* is *a departing from God. We may preſent our bodies indeed before God, yet without faith can we not digeſt the word of God into ſpiritual nouriſhment*, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* ſaies.

There is required of us,

1. *An hiſtorical faith*, whereby we believe the *word* of God to be the *word* of God, and *cloſe* with the truth of it in our aſſent and judgement. The underſtanding is the *leading facultie* of the ſoul, and the *guide of reaſon*; I ſhall never cloſe with that truth in my *affections* to *love* it, in my *will* to *practiſe* it, which I do not firſt *aſ-*

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ſent unto in my *underſtanding*: nor can the *will* embrace that as good, which the *underſtanding* aſſents not to as true. But this is not enough; for there is required further,

2. *A particular applying faith*, whereby the ſoul cloſeth with the *word*, as *proper* to it ſelf: when it particularly applies the *promiſes*, and cloſes with the *reproofs* and *threatnings* of the *word*. This makes the *word* of God to be ineffectual, becauſe men ſhift it off from themſelves; as, *ſuch a reproof of ſin concern'd not me: the Miniſter reproved ſuch an one*, &c. A man may aſſent to the truth of a *promiſe*, and yet it be a *dry-breaſt* to him without the *application* of it by a *particular* faith: ſo to the truth of a *threatning*, and yet not be humbled. *Faith* is neceſſarie to the hearing of the *word* profitably.

I. *As the eye of faith diſcerns the truth of the word, as it pries into the myſteries of the Goſpel, which the natural man perceives not.* The Apoſtle 1 *Cor.*2.14. gives a reaſon why a natural man cannot perceive theſe; *becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*, and ſo no object ſuitable to a carnal eye. It is ſaid of Chriſts entertainment, *John* 1.5. *The darkneſs compreh ndeth not the light*: every *unbeliever* is no better then *mere darkneſs*, though improved with the height of acquired knowledge; as *Nicodemus* and *Paul* are very pregnant proofs of this: and I appeal to your ſelves; *Are men like to profit by the word they perceive not, nor underſtand?*

II. *As it makes the ſoul to reliſh, and delight in the word of God.* To an unbeliever, the great *myſteries* of the Goſpel are but *fooliſhneſs*, 1 Cor. 1.23,24. *The carnal minde is not ſubject to the law of God*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8.7. A *carnal* minde may approve of the word of God, as true and good, but never cloſe with it throughly and heartily, becauſe it is contrarie to it. As a learned man may approve of the light, as excellent in it ſelf, but will not endure to look long upon it, becauſe it may be hurtfull to his weak eyes: thus a *carnal* heart may aſſent to the truth of Gods word, and be convinced of the equitie and goodneſs of it, yet not cloſe with it, becauſe contrarie to his *carnal intereſts*, and *corrupt principles*; and ſo long no profiting by it. As S. *Auguſtine* ſaith, *Quid hæc duo conferunt homini, qui & confitetur verum, & collaudat eloquium, nec inclinat aſſenſum?* *who inclines not his aſſent*, viz. ſo as to practiſe it. *Aug. lib. 4. c. 13. de doctr. Chriſt.*

Ninethly, The nineth ground is *love of ſome darling and boſome ſin and corruption.* The Apoſtle indeed, *James* 1.21. commands to *lay aſide all ſuperfluitie of naughtineſs*; but eſpecially any *darling* ſin, which elſe will make the word unprofitable upon a double account.

I. *As it prejudiceth the ſoul againſt the moſt profitable preaching.*

Such an one must have *placentia*, and speak the language of those in *Isaiah* 30.10. *They say to the seers, see not: and to the Prophets, prophesie not to us right things, but speak unto us smooth things*, &c. Wholesome *reproofs* are too bitter *pils* for him to take down, because they will stirre the humours that are corrupt. And therefore you shall observe, that some, who have seemingly made a large progress in the profession of the word, have been wholly offended at it, when it hath searched, and disturb their secret *bosome* corruption. Thus it was with *Herod*, πολλὰ ποιεῖ, *he did many things*, and demonstrated a very fair affection to the word of God, as in *Mark* 6. 20. till it came to his *Herodias*; and then he is incensed so far against *John*, as to *take off* his *head*: nay, the *young man* went further, to his πάντα ταῦτα, *all these have I kept*, and that ἐκ νεότητός μου, *from his youth*, Mark 10.20. till it came to his *covetousnesse*, then the commands of Christ prove ineffectual, and he goes away *sorrowfully*. While a man retains the love of any *darling* sin, he is apt to come with a *settled* resolution, let the Preacher say what he will, shew him the nature, danger, and guilt of such or such a sin, to go on still, as it is *Jer.*2.25.

II. *As it disaffects them to the preacher.* That did disaffect the Pharisees so much against Christ, his *reproving* their *darling* sin of *Hypocrisie*. This caused *Felix* to dismiss *Paul*, his *touching* upon his darling sin of *intemperance* and *injustice*. And hence proceeds the *ebbings* and *flowings* of mens affections to the same Minister. You shall have some, who will constantly attend upon a Minister, and afford him a very fair aprobation, till he come powerfully to search his bosome corruption, then he is offended, nay, and perhaps persecutes the Minister too. Thus it fared with Christ himself, : one while they crie, *never man spake like him*, and another while, *Crucifie him, crucifie him*. See the *Galatians* inconstancie to S. *Paul* in *Galat.* 4.14,15,16. they afforded him both *reverence*, verse 14. and *love*, verse 15. *rari amoris indicium, oculos eruere plus est, quàm vitam profundere*, saies *Calvin*: but how soon is this *love* degenerated into *hatred* and *enmitie*, verse 16. and that onely because he *told them the truth. Veritas odium*, as saith the *Comœdian*: so tell men the *truth* in laying before them the evil *nature* and *danger* of those sins they live in, they presently entertain a secret enmitie against them: and if once mens spirits come to be *embittered* against the preacher, *suavis non erit doctrinæ gustus*; they will finde no *sweet relish* in the word of God.

Tenthly, The tenth ground is *unpreparednesse*, when men rush out of their worldly employments without *prayer* or *meditation* into the house of God, never considering either into whose *presence*,

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or *ſervice* they come. God requires a *holy preparation* to all our ſervices, and that not onely *habitually*, but *actually* prepared and diſpoſed for them. *Keep thy foot*, ſaith the *Wiſeman*, Eccleſ. 5.1. *when thou goeſt to the houſe of God.* This *holy preparation* was ſhadowed out by the peoples *waſhing their clothes* before the deliverie of the *Law*, Exod. 19.10,11. and by *Moſes his putting off his ſhoe*, before God ſpake, and diſcovered himſelf to him, *Exod.* 3.5,6. intimating a *putting off our carnal affections*, and *purging our ſouls* before we come to hear the word: this is neceſſarie, becauſe to come without this preparation,

I. Is irreverent. You eſteem it juſtly a *high incivilitie* to preſs into a Princes *Palace* with *ragged, dirtie clothes*, or to ſit at his table with *unwaſhen hands*. How much do men affect cleanneſs, and ſtudie neatneſs, when they preſent themſelves to the preſence of any great man? and is it not much more irreverent to appear before God in his *Temple* in our *ſins* and *corruptions*? May we not juſtly fear to be an offence to his *pure eyes*? How do men ſtudie *words* and *geſtures* ſuitable to the perſon of any great one, to whom they make their applications? and doth not a reſolved prepared *reverence* much more become us, when we addreſs our ſelves to God? *David* reſolved himſelf upon this preparation, *Pſal.* 26.6. *I will waſh mine hands in innocencie, ſo will I compaſs thine altar.* Thus when *Jacob* went to worſhip God at *Bethel*, he purged his houſe of all the Idols, and made his ſons to *waſh their clothes*, Gen. 35.2,3. We ſhould not onely have our hearts raiſed to *awfull apprehenſions* of Gods Majeſtie and preſence, but our outward man alſo compoſed to a *decent becomingneſs* and *holy reverence*, as *Jacob* ſaid of *Bethel*, Gen.28.16,17. *How dreadfull is this place!* And thus did *Cornelius*, when *Peter* was to preach unto him, ſet himſelf in the *preſence of God*, Acts 10.33. So ſhould we come with that *reverence* and *preparedneſs*, as becomes the preſence of God.

II. *Unprofitable.* Hence that caution, *Luke* 18. *Take heed therefore how you hear. Thornes* grow *naturally*; but *ſeed*, you know, thrives not, but when the ground is firſt *fitted* and *prepared*: *ſin* encreaſeth *naturally* in our *corrupt* hearts, but they are no fit ſoil naturally for the word of God, they muſt be firſt *fitted* and *prepared* before the ſeed will grow and thrive there. *Unpreparedneſs* makes every duty to be ineffectual as you may ſee in *Job* 11.13,14. Give me leave to allude to that of the *Wiſeman*, *prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thy ſelf in the field and afterward build thine houſe*, *Prov.* 24.27. ſo ſay I, Prepare thy ſelf at home, and then come to build up thy ſelf in faith and holineſs. An *unprepared* hearer will be an *unprofitable* hearer.

Eleventhly,

Eleventhly, The eleventh ground is *Curioſity*: when men come to the Word, affecting more the *elegancy* of the *expreſſion*, then the *wholeſomeneſs* of the *truth*. *Cui nullus in dicendo ſermo placet niſi Grammaticè fuerit conceptus, Dialecticè imaginatus, Rhetoricè purpuratus*, as S. *Auguſtine* expreſſes it. Such like not their ſpiritual food unleſs it be adorned with the *flowers* of *Rhetorick*, who regard more how *handſome* the proviſion be, then how wholeſome. Hence *errour* many times *handſomely dreſſed* findes more entertainment, then a *plain truth*. So men take *poyſon* inſtead of *nouriſhment*: thus when men catch more at an *elegancy* in a Sermon, then a *promiſe*; they may be *pleaſed* perhaps, but little *profited*. In *ſeed* you look not at *leaves*, as you doe in *flowers*; but at the *inward vertue*, whereby it hath an aptitude to fructifie: ſo ſhould we in the *ſeed* of the word, not prize the outward *ſeeming dreſs* and *beauty* of it ſo much, as the *inward efficacy* of it, whereby it may *fructifie* in your hearts and lives.

Chryſolog. ſerm. 18.

Qui maturitatis fructum quærit, deſpicit amæna camporum, ſaies *Chryſologus*. He that deſires *profit* from a field, lookes to the *ripeneſs* of the *corn*, not to the *beauty* of the *cockle*, which may more gratifie the *eye* but not fill the *barn* and *granary*: ſo he that deſires to profit by the word, muſt not attend the *adorning* of *Rhetorick*, which may perhaps more *pleaſe* the *fancy*, but not at all *relliſh* the *ſoul*, ſuch may more gratify the *palate*, but it is not ſo good for *nouriſhment*. The affected *elegancy* of a Sermon may more gratify *curioſity*, but not profit and nouriſh the *ſoul*. It is true that S. *Auguſtin* obſerves, that *propter faſtidia plurimorum, etiam ea, ſine quibus vivere non poſſumus, alimenta condienda ſunt*. But they live miſerablely that live altogether upon *ſauces*. There is another curioſity, much like this, which makes the word unprofitable, and that is a *nice ſquemiſhneſs*, that men *nauſeate* truth, that they have heard of before; as an ill *ſqueaſy* ſtomach, which cannot make *two meales* of the *ſame* meat: whereas, we had need, conſidering our *dulneſs* to underſtand, our *forgetfulneſs* of what we have heard, to have the *ſame* truths preached over and over again, and yet ſhall we finde all little enough. We may ſee what was the temper of thoſe in *Acts* 13. 42. they beſought the Apoſtles, that the *ſame words might be taught again the next Sabbath*: this I ſpeak, not to *patronize* lazineſs in the preacher, but to *correct* the curioſity of the hearer; which makes the word become ſo unprofitable to them.

Twelfthly, The twelfth ground is, *Not attending upon a conſtant ſettled miniſtery*. This is that which God hath uſed from the firſt planting of Churches for the edification of his people, as appears from *Acts* 20. 28. and confirmed by the practiſe of the whole primitive Church. *Trees* oft *tranſplanted* can take no firm

rooting: a *rolling ſtone*, we ſay, *gathers no moſs*: thoſe, whoſe fickle unſettledneſs prompts them to run from this Miniſter to that, and to ſettle under none, are like to profit very little by the word. This S. *Paul* reproves ſharply in his *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 1. 12, 13. He walkes ſecurely, that is guided by ſome *fixed ſtar*, whiles he who followes ſome *meteor* is led into ſome bog or pit: ſo thoſe, who walk by the light of ſome *ſettled Miniſter* as a *ſtar fixed* to his *orb*, are preſerved ſafe in the way of Religion, but thoſe who follow *wandring meteors* fall into ſome pit of errour. Many thrive and live healthfully on *one diſh*, while others ſurfeit of *variety*. By attending upon a *ſettled Miniſter*, you come to be acquainted with his *ſtyle*, familiar with his *phraſe*, and learn his *method*, which will facilitate, and ſtrengthen memory, that you may carry away, and profit more by him.

Thirteenthly, The thirteenth ground is *want of love to the word of God*. Men come out of *cuſtome*, and not out of a *real ſenſe* of the *want* of the word, or with any love unto it. If men had ſuch affections to the word, as *David* profeſſeth of himſelf that he had, *Pſal.* 119. 20. that his ſoul did even *break for the longings* he had after Gods word, much more would they profit by it. If with *Job* they *prized* it more then *their ordinary food*, Job 23. 12. A man that ſits down to his meals, when he hath no liking to the meat ſet before him, he will not nouriſh *kindly* by it, neither will any nouriſh *ſpiritually*, that brings not a good affection to the word of God.

I. It is ſo in all *other* knowledge: you may perhaps have it by experience. If you put your children to a *trade* which they do not deſire or love, they will ſcarcely prove *artiſts* in it; ſo if men put their children out, intending to make them *ſcholars*; if they do not love their books, they will prove but *dunces*; and therefore many parents do wiſely diſpoſe of their children, according to their *affections* and *inclinations*: ſo if men love not the word of God, they are not probable to make any great *proficiency* in it. *Love* is a *quickning affection*; what I *love*, I am ready to take *pains* for, and not to endure to be without it. Thus if men did *love* the word, they would take *pains* for it, *familiariſe* it to them by much reading, frequent hearing, ſerious meditation, and not endure to be without it. Let *David* be an example; *Oh, how do I love thy Law!* and this puts upon *meditating* upon the law *day and night*: and when he was without it, he *mourns* for it, and ſayes, *One day in Gods courts is better then a thouſand elſwhere*; and he cannot *reflect* upon his former enjoyment of that word without a *tear*, Pſal. 42. 4. The Apoſtle is very full and pertinent to this purpoſe, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. *As new born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby*: as a

childe finds *ſweetneſs* in nothing but the *breaſt:* ſo that it cries if it be without it; and thus if we affect the word, we ſhall thrive by it.

II. This provokes God to proceed *judicially*, to give men up to unprofitableneſs, and while they like not the *truth*, to give them up to *errour*. The Apoſtle is expreſs in this, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 10. And here we ſee that *notional* profeſſours, who have got a *notion* of truth in their *heads*, but not the *love* of truth in their *hearts*, oft turn *Apoſtates*, and *back-ſliders*, as theſe times give us ſad experience of. When the *Iſraelites* began to loath *manna*, God gave them *quails* indeed, but his *wrath* with them, Numb. 11. 33. and *leanneſs into their ſouls*, Pſal. 106. 15. So when men love not the *manna* of the word, &c. *Love* of the truth puts men upon a *conſtant attendance* upon the word, as the means of grace and knowledge: and ſo conſequently, they are like to profit by it: ſo it is ſaid of the *Theſſalonians*, that they were *exemplary believers*, 1 *Theſſ.* 1. 7. and the reaſon thereof is given, verſ. 6. becauſe *they received the word with much joy*.

Fourteenthly, The fourteenth ground is *a reſting in the Ordinance*, in the *opus operatum*, *the work done*, and ſo look no further. And this men are very apt to do, as *Micah* bleſſes himſelf, *Judg.* 17. 13. becauſe he had gotten a *Levite* into his houſe: ſo many conclude the *love of God*, and their *own ſecurity*, barely upon the enjoyment of a *miniſtery* and *preaching*. So did thoſe in *Jer.* 7. 4. They cry out, *The Temple of the Lord:* and ſo many alſo of the Goſpel, *We enjoy that, and therefore all is well*. You may finde ſome making plea of this unto Chriſt, *Luke* 13. 26. *Thou haſt taught in our ſtreets*; but Chriſt diſmiſſes them for all that, with a *neſcio*; *I know you not*, verſ. 27. Thus did the Jews of old, as in *Rom.* 2. 17. they *reſted in the law*, and *made their boaſt of God:* and ſo do Chriſtians now, they think that they have done God ſervice abundantly, if they have heard two ſermons on the Sabbath-day, and never look to their proficiency. As many an idle ſcholar ſatisfies himſelf, that he hath been at his Tutours lecture, though he cares not to profit by it. If you reſt onely in this, it may be ſo far from profiting you, that it may be your ruine. Chriſt at the laſt-day will acquit none for enjoying the Goſpel, but condemn them for not profiting by it, 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 7.

Fifteenthly, The fifteenth ground is *Unfaithfulneſs of memory, and forgetfulneſs, when the word goes in at one ear, and out at another*. When this *ſpiritual food* ſtayes not with us, it is not like to *nouriſh* us. The word muſt be *treaſured* up in the *memory*, before it can *fructifie* in our *hearts*. It is not the *forgetful hearer* that is *bleſſed*, Jam. 1. 25. ſuch an one is like a man who looks his *face* in a *glaſs*, and preſently forgets,

forgets; ſo ſuch an one takes a *glance* at the word, and the word is out of his memory, aſſoon as himſelf is out of the Church. If you would profit by the word, you muſt practiſe the Apoſtles counſel, *Hebr.* 2. 1. μὴ παραῤῥυῶμεν, *Let nothing ſlip*: a Metaphor from a *ſieve* or *leaking veſſel*, when the liquour runs out as faſt as it is put in. But becauſe want of memory is a great complaint among many, and ſome of them, out of queſtion, *ſerious* Chriſtians, I ſhall give theſe brief directions.

1. *Pray for the Spirit:* one office of whom is to be a *remembrancer*, John 14. 26.

2. *Meditate in private upon the word of God.* Men goe out of the church preſently to their *worldly employment*, and give liberty to their *vain thoughts*, and *idle diſcourſes*, and ſo the word is forgotten.

3. *Confer with others about the truths thou heareſt.* This *conference* will both *ſtrengthen* memory, and *faſten* truths in it, and alſo *quicken* and *enflame* affections to it; as coales lying together kindle each other: thus did the *diſciples*, Luc. 24. 14. Rather then forget a profitable truth conſult the miniſter: it is needleſs *modeſty* in thee, if thou enquire not, and *pride* in him, if he does not enforme thee.

4. *Get your affections raiſed and enflamed to truth.* If men loved the word of God, they would remember it more: did you ever know a *covetous miſer* forget where his bags were laid: if we could eſteem the word as our *treaſures*, and *greater treaſures* then thoſe *of Gold* we ſhould remember more of it.

5. *Perhaps, what thou remembreſt (though but little) keeps thee to cloſe walking with God.* Be not diſcouraged, thou thriveſt more then one, who can carry away a whole Sermon, and lives not ſuitablely, and likely it is, that God may bring into thy remembrance more, according as thou ſtandeſt in need of it.

6. *Improve what thou remembreſt by prayer and practiſe.* Retire thy ſelf, and turn the *Sermon* into a *prayer*, and that will rivet it in thy memory: however turn it into *practiſe*, and thou wilt never forget it. An *artiſt* will never forget the *rules* of that *trade*, vvhich he daily practiſeth: Sermons are but *notions* to ſuch, vvho experience not the efficacy of them in their lives.

Sixteenthly, The ſixteenth ground is *affectation of novelty and itching eares.* This puts men upon *heaping to themſelves teachers*, and forſaking ſound preaching, and teachers too. The Apoſtle foretold ſuch there ſhould be in 2 *Tim.* 4. 3, 4. and vve may ſafely ſay, that it is fulfilled in our daies. This is one of the great ſprings of *hereſie* and *errour*, the minde of man is *novitatis avida*; and hence *new errour* pleaſeth many more then *old truth*, and every *new-fan-*

gled opinion, though he that runs may read it contrary to Scripture and reaſon, creates in mens minds at leaſt a ſuſpition of the truth, which all ages of the Church harh profeſſed. I am ſure Chriſt makes it the *badge* of his ſheep, that they will onely *hear his voice*, and not *ſtrangers*, *Joh.* 10. 5. his *voice* in his *word* and by his *Miniſters*. While men keep not to the wholeſome word of God, but affect this variety of *phanſy* & *opinion*, they *ſurfet*, not *thrive*. *Gellius* tells us of *Demoſthenes*, that he being young and *Plato's* ſcholar, by chance going to hear *Plato*, reſolved *experiri an ad digna auditu tanto properatum ſtudio foret*; upon which he deſerted *Plato*, and became *Calliſtratus* his diſciple: thus many affecting *novelty*, though formerly in profeſſion diſciples, are now *turned to fables*, and in ſtead of being *nouriſhed* by the *word*, are *poyſoned* with *errour*.

Gell. lib. 3. cap. 13.

The ſeventeenth ground is, *Neglect of a carefull practiſe of what we hear:* if men came with a reſolution to practiſe, they would go away with much more profit: for this would bring them with a great appetite and liking of the word of God: as they in *Acts* 10. 33. They profeſſed themſelves to be *as in the preſence of God to hear all*; that is, to hear ſo as to practiſe. This is your wiſdome, *Brethren*, to come with a reſolution to practiſe: for which you have our Saviour, *Mat.* 7. 24. *He is a wiſeman, that heareth and doth my ſayings*: and S. *James* would have us not to be *hearers onely*, but *doers of the word*, Jam. 1. 22. for ſuch onely are *bleſſed* in our Saviours account, *Luk.* 11. 28. I pray, conſider that propheſie of *Goſpel-times*, with what reſolution they invite one another to hear: viz. with a reſolution to practiſe, *Eſay.* 2. 3. *Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the houſe of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his wayes:* and what more ordinary, then to call on one another in theſe dayes, *Come, we will go hear ſuch a man to day?* but obſerve what followes; *& we will walk in his ways:* and do you invite one another, *Brethren*, for this end? nay, rather when you go to hear the word, is there not oft a ſecret *reſerve* in your heart to go on in your ſins? They who come with ſuch a reſolution, and not to practiſe, are not like to profit by the word. It is by this that Chriſt will have *his* diſciples known, *Joh.* 8. 31. *If ye continue in my word, then are ye my diſciples indeed:* and to thoſe God tells us, that he will *continue his mercy and goodneſs*, Pſal. 103. 17, 18. *To ſuch as keep his covenant, and that remember his commandements to do them.*

The eighteenth ground is, *Anger & malice either againſt the word, or the Miniſter of it.* Many, when the word of God ſearches and findes them out, rage againſt it, or the Miniſter of it. As you may ſee they dealt with *Stephen*, Acts 7. 54. they *gnaſhed upon him with their teeth:* and at verſ. 57. they *ran upon him with one accord, and caſt him*

him out of the city. Therefore the Apoſtle exhorts thoſe, who would *ſo receive the word*, as to *ſave their ſouls*, to *receive it with meekneſs*, *Jam.* 1.21. that is, with a milde, humble, tractable ſpirit: that as the Preacher is to *inſtruct you in meekneſs*, 2 *Tim.* 2.25. that is, with gentleneſs and tenderneſs to your perſons, with anger and zeal againſt ſin; ſo you are to hear with ſubmiſſive and tractable ſpirits, as they did, *Acts* 10.33. laying aſide all enmity againſt the word and the preacher of it. And when by the word he convinceth you, look upon him as a *Chirurgion*, that comes to ſearch your ſores in order to a cure; and when he preſſeth duty, be facile and tractable. *The wiſdome that is from above*, ſaith S. *James*, *is gentle, and eaſie to be intreated:* and where ſhall we finde this wiſdome in men? you ſhall ſooner *enrage* then *perſwade*. As concerning the generality of men, thoſe the Apoſtle calls ἀτόπους, *abſurd men*, 2 *Theſſ.* 3.2. that will quarrel with the *Chyrurgion*, when he comes to binde up their wounds. You muſt learn, *Brethren*, to ſubmit to the word of God in humility, if ever you will profit by it; ſay as did *Samuel*, *Speak, Lord, for thy ſervant heareth.* Jam. 3.17.

The nineteenth ground is, *Neglect of a ſpecial application of the word preached.* Each hearer almoſt is ready to put off the word of God to another: *Such a reproof concern'd not me: there the Preacher hit ſuch an one: ſuch a threatning is nothing to me*: and many ſuch like. If ever you will profit by the word, you muſt do as the diſciples did: when Chriſt had told them one of them ſhould *betray him*, each of them applied it to himſelf, ſaying, *Lord, Is it I?* ſo you muſt make a particular application of *promiſes*, *threatnings*, and *precepts*. The beſt food will not nouriſh, unleſs it be received; you cannot live by feeding another man; no more will the word of God, except it be *particularly* applyed to our ſelves. It ſhould at leaſt put us upon a ſerious examination; *Doth this threatning appertain to me? Have I intereſt in this promiſe?* The childe may *ſtarve*, though the mother hath a *full breaſt*, if it *ſucks* not at it: ſo we at the *breaſts* of the *promiſes*, unleſs by the Application of a *particular faith*, we make them our own. We muſt not onely hear of the promiſes ſlightly, but we muſt ſearch them out, and that ſo as we may *know them for our good*, *Job* 5.27. In a Princes *proclamation*, every one will look to that which concerns himſelf; ſo ſhould we in the *proclamation* of the Goſpel, look to that which in *particular* concerns us, and in *particular* apply it to us. And therefore you may obſerve, that when God makes the word to be effectual, he does it by a particular application of it to the ſoul; as in that of *Nathan* to *David*, *Thou art the man:* for it is true that *Job* hath obſerved, *Job* 33.14. *God ſpeaketh once, yea twice, yet men perceive it not:*

but then in verſ. 6. *He openeth their ears, and ſealeth their inſtruction*: that is, by a particular application of the word. I know there are and may be miſcarriages here: the *preſumptuous* ſinner is too ready to *catch at*, and run away with a *promiſe*: the *humbled dejected* ſinner to *deſpair* under *threatnings*. A great piece of wiſdome it is to apply the word ſuitably to our conditions: if *fainting*, the *promiſes*; if *ſecure*, the *threatnings*: and this is ſo *to be wiſe*, as *to be wiſe for ones ſelf*, Prov. 9. 12. and ſo to profit by the word.

And this is the ſecond ground of unprofitable hearing in regard of *Hearers*: the third ground is in reſpect of the *Word it ſelf*.

The third General ground of unprofitable hearing is in regard of the *Word it ſelf*. But you will ſay, *How is it poſſible that the word it ſelf ſhould be a cauſe of unprofitableneſs*, which Scripture ſo much magnifies, and dignifies with ſuch glorious titles, that ſpeak the power of it. As that, *The Goſpel is our ſalvation*, Epheſ. 1. 13. *The ſword of the Spirit*, Epheſ. 6. 17. *The miniſtration of the Spirit and righteouſneſs*, 2 Cor. 3. 8, 9. and that *it is the power of God unto ſalvation*, Rom. 1. 16? I anſwer, It is not the cauſe of unprofitableneſs *properly*, but by reaſon of *mens corruption* it is ſo by *accident*. The word in it ſelfe conſidered is ὠφέλιμος 2 Tim. 3. 16. but through *mens corruptions*, it becomes *unprofitable*, becauſe *common*: the *Iſraelites* at firſt admired the *Manna*, but afterward loathed it, when it grew common, and began to entertain *longings* after their *onions*, and *garlick* in *Egypt*; and we may ſee how they quarel, and murmure at it, *Numb*, 11. 5, 6. Oh diſingenuous ingratitude! what could they have *better* then meat from heaven? I wiſh this were not the language of many! *what, nothing but this preaching?* the old complaint was, that, *men were like to periſh for want of viſion*: now men begin to *ſurfeit* on it. Mans corrupt nature affects *variety*, never long pleaſed with the ſame thing, and long enjoyment breeds a diſrelliſh in us of the beſt things, we prize *pearls*, cheifely, becauſe *rare* and *coſtly*: the *Romans* wore them upon their ſhoes, when common: *vniones emergere è luto cupiunt*, ſaith *Tertull. much adoe to keep them out of the dirt*: thus the *pearl* of the Goſpel is troden *under foot*, becauſe *ordinary* and *common*. The *Indians* prize not precious pearls ſo much becauſe common; which our Merchants venture expence and danger to procure: many prize not the preaching of the Goſpel, which the Merchant ſells all for, that he may purchaſe it. And howdo we diſeſteem that means of grace which many a dark corner of the nation would be thankefull to enjoy? I pray God we be not taught at length how to value our plenty of the *bread of life* more by the want of it.

How do they prize the *ſalutes* of the ſun, who have half a years *darkeneſs*?

darkness? which darkness teaches them the value of it; while we pass it over, and look upon it as an ordinary thing, because we enjoy it daily. The *Egyptians* sure never prized *light* so much, as when they had experienced the *plague* of *darkness*. How would thousands in the nation, in the world, *prize* that light of the Gospel, which we *under-value*, and grow wanton under? It is indeed much pitie and shame to us, that good food should be *nauseated*, because often set before us: it is a sign our stomachs are not good; our spiritual appetites are distempered. The Scripture speaks fully to the ready and chearfull entertainment of the *Gospel-sound*, when it was first preached to the Gentiles, as appears by the instances of *Cornelius*'s whole family, of *Sergius Paulus* at *Ephesus*; yea, even *Cesars* housholds at *Rome*, Philip. 4. 11. and from the sudden and large spreading of the Gospel in *Rome*, *Corinth*, *Ephesus*, and the rest. See we how it was in the days of *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 3. 14. the publick exercise of the prophetical office was much decayed by the *negligence* of old *Eli*, and *wickedness* of his *sons*. *Pauci erant pii in populo, & his erat pretiosum verbum, quia raro fiebat ejus audiendi copia*: so *Paræus* upon the place. When preaching was more rare, some would have *travelled* to hear a sermon, who will not now stir *out of doors* for it: and this must needs cause unprofitableness; for while men have low thoughts of the *Ordinance*, they will profit little by it. What the *Wiseman* saith, *Prov.* 25. 17. *Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbours house, lest he be weary of thee*; may be applyed to this thus; That men are apt to *nauseate* the word of God, because so oft enjoyed by them. Men look at it as a *matter of course*, and regard not the *institution and Ordinance* of God, and so under-valuing it, remain unprofitable under it. See how God layes this to the charge of Israel, *Hos.* 8. 12. *I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing. Written to him*] in *contradistinction* to all other people; yet he disesteems them. *Singulari privilegio & eximio illos præ aliis ornavi, & ipsi susque déque habent, quasi rem nihili*: so *Paræus*. And this charge it is to be feared, may be laid to many in these days, who pretend fair to the word of God.

Paræus in loc.

The fourth *General ground* is in respect of *God*. *Unprofitableness*, as a *sin*, cannot come from God, but as a *punishment* of mens former neglect, and wilfull contempt of the word of God: for though Gods holiness permits him not to have any hand in sin, as *sin*, it being a *contrariety* to his *nature*, and that which he indispensably hateth, yet God may will sin as a *punishment*, not out of *love* to the *sin*, but to punish the person: for though sin be *intrinsecally* evil, yet the manifestation of Gods justice is good: and God for former pro-

13.

provocations oft judicially leaves the creature, and permits him to fall into further ſin, as he dealt with the Gentiles, *Rom.* 1.21. and ſo was the *inceſt* of *Abſolom*, as a puniſhment of *Davids adultery*, 2 *Sam.* 12.11. Now God proceeds judicially againſt thoſe who live unprofitably under the word, theſe eight wayes.

I. Sometimes God proceeds in ſeverity againſt *their perſons*, *ruines* and *deſtroyes* them. If Chriſt comes year after year into the *vineyard*, and findes the *fig-tree* to *bear no fruit*, he gives commiſſion to *cut it down*, Luke 13.7. When God expects, *brethren*, your *fruitfulneſs* under the means, and finds you unprofitable, his wrath is provoked, and you cut up as a burthen to the earth; ſo Matth. 3.10. Thus God dealt with the *Jews*, 2 Chron. 36.15,16. he bare with them a long time, till there was no remedie. God will not always endure to have his *meſſengers* and *meſſages* contemned. Read *Jerem.* 7.12,13,14. and ſee there how God dealt with *Shiloh*, and what he threatens to do to the *Jews*, and the reaſon of all was *their unprofitableneſs*, as we ſee at ver. 10. they pretended fair to the *word* and *houſe* of God, yet did they not *profit* ſo, as to leave their ſins: for this God threats their ruine.

II. Sometimes he *denyes* and *with-draws* that *grace from them*, by which they may be enabled to profit; and thus God may be ſaid to *concur* to mens *unprofitableneſs*; as the *Sun* may be ſaid to be the cauſe of *darkneſs*, by with-drawing its light. When men obſtinately reſiſt the ſtrivings of the Spirit in the miniſtery of the word: God ſaith, *My Spirit ſhall no longer ſtrive with him.* As he ſaith, *Hoſ.* 4.17. *Ephraim is joyned to idols; let him alone:* and in *Revel.* 22.11. *He that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill:* ſo, *he that is unprofitable, let him be unprofitable ſtill.* Oh ſad judgement! and is as ſadly expreſſed, *Eſay* 66, the 3, and 4. *They have choſen their own ways, and their ſoul delights in their abominations: I alſo will chooſe their deluſions, &c.* which is as much as to ſay, he will leave them to themſelves, and ſuffer them to go on to be deluded by thoſe deluſions, as ſuch they having wilfuly choſen. Men care not to profit by the word, and God gives them over to unprofitableneſs, as Chriſt curſed the fig-tree, *Matth.* 21.19.

III. *By taking the Goſpel wholly away*, and *removing the candleſtick from them.* Thus Chriſt threatned to proceed againſt *Epheſus*, unleſs by a *ſpeedy return* ſhe *prevented* it, *Rev.* 2.5. *Jeruſalem* was come to the height of wickedneſs, when the Goſpel was removed, *Matth.* 23.37,38. The *Jews* by a wilfull contempt firſt *put away* the Goſpel from themſelves, before God took it away from them, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks expreſſely, *Acts* 13.46. God will not always caſt this *pearl* before *ſwine*, who, as *Clemens* expreſſeth it, *de-*

light

light more in the mud of their luſts, then in the pure waters of the Sanctuary in the word of God. God will not always caſt his *childrens bread* to the *dogs*. God threatens a famine of the word upon the Jews, *Amos* 8. Would you know the reaſon? ſee ver. 5. they began to be weary of it, and unprofitable under it. As a *maſter* ſometimes deals with a bad *ſervant*, pulls his *livery* over his ears, and turns him out of doors; ſo God oft deals with men, takes away his *Word* and *Ordinances*, his *livery* and *cognizance:* or, as a man divorcing an *adulterous* wife, takes away all her *jewels* and *garments*, and puts them upon another; ſo God, when people go a *whoring*, *takes away from them* the *Goſpel* and *Ordinances*, which are the *glory* and *ornament* of a nation, and gives them to others.

IV. *If he does continue the Goſpel, yet he takes away the able and faithful Miniſters of it.* Obſerve how God dealt with his vineyard, *Iſa.* 5. great expence you may ſee he had been at, verſ. 2. ſo much, that he appeals to their own judgements, *what* he *could have done more*, what coſt he ſhould further beſtow upon them, as to *outward means*, ver. 4. but there being no ſuitable *thriving* under all this, ſee how the Lord proceeds judicially againſt it: after the threatning of a *totall devaſtation*, ver. 5. he adds, *that the clouds ſhould rain no more upon it.* So doth God deal with an unprofitable people, he removes theſe *clouds* (as Miniſters are called) who are to *drop fatneſs* into the ſoul, and lets you ſit under *clouds without water*, and none of the *dews of heaven* in them to make you *thrive*. And how hath God dealt of late in this Nation, removing from us many *eminent Preachers*, and pulling down many *pillars* of the *Church?* And may we not juſtly fear, that this hath been by many mens *unprofitableneſs* and *wantonneſs* under the word of God? Is it not a ſign that Gods vineyard hath brought forth little fruit? when God hath *eclipſed* ſo many *ſtars* of the *firſt magnitude?* Is it not to be feared it is becauſe men have neglected to walk by, and improve the *light* of thoſe, who have held out the Goſpel to them?

V. *By taking away the Miniſters gifts.* The people are apt to complain of nothing more, then that their preachers want *abilities* and *gifts*: perhaps it is a judgement upon your unprofitableneſs under, and abuſe of the word. Alas! the Miniſter is nothing without *divine influence*, and *communication* in his *miniſterial endowments*. It is God that gives *ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, &c.* Epheſ. 4. 11. And he may oft-times with-draw this influence. God may *dry up* the *breaſt*, becauſe you thrive not by the *ſincere milk* of the word. *Propter malum populum, etiam bonis tollitur ſermo doctoribus*, ſo *Gregorie*. *Hom.* 12. *in Ezek.* 3. 26.

VI. *By denying ſucceſs to the word preached, though he continue able*

Miniſters. God muſt *give the increaſe*, even when a *Paul preacheth*, and an *Apollos waters*; which he is pleaſed oft to deny. Becauſe of our *neglect* and *contempt* of his word, and *careleſneſs* to profit under it, he denies the *dews* of his *bleſsing*, which ſhould make the ſeed of the word thrive and proſper. Or, if the Miniſter preaches *powerfully*, yet perhaps not *ſuitably* to thy neceſſities, not what may profit; and this by a ſecret judgement of God upon thy obſtinate unprofitableneſs under former enjoyments of the word. You have a very pregnant inſtance of this, *Ezek.* 3. 26. where God tells the Prophet, that he ſhould be *dumb*, and not be a *reprover* unto them: and theſe *reproofs* (as I have often hinted) are moſt like to profit; as S. *Gregory* ſayes, *Magna omnipotentis Dei gratia eſt, cùm iniquè agentibus durus à doctoribus ſermo increpationis profertur.*

Gregor. in Ezek.

VII. *By letting looſe a ſpirit of deluſion, and by ſuffering falſe prophets to deceive, and gull the people, and to poyſon them with errour inſtead of feeding them with the word of God.* When Gods *vineyard* brings forth *bryars* inſtead of *fruit*, he ſuffers the *wolues*, and the *foxes* to *eat it up*, Eſay. 5. 4. *ſive obrepant vulpes & lupi in Eccleſiam, hoc totum tribuere convenit ingratitudini noſtræ: quia fructum non reddidimus, qualem decebat, ſuimúſque deſides & otioſi*, ſaith Calvin. And I cannot but in my ſerious thoughts reſolve that *inundation* of *Hereſies* upon this nation, and all thoſe *deluſions*, which go abroad, into the *judgement* of God, *giving men over to ſtrong deluſions to believe lies*, becauſe they improved not, nor delighted in the truth, in the love of it: as God gave the *lying ſpirit* commiſſion to go and deceive *Ahab*, 1 *Kings* 22. 22. And ſure God hath in his *juſtice* and *wrath*, for our *wantonneſs* under and *inconſtancy* to the truth, let looſe many *lying ſpirits* in our daies, which miſerablely miſlead many into damnable *Hereſies*.

Calv. in loc.

VIII. *By delivering up to Satan, and permiting him to have power over them.* It is ſaid of *Judas*, John. 13. 27. that *Satan entred into his heart*: if the *word* take not poſſeſſion of thy heart, the *devil* will, whom God uſeth as the *inſtrument* and *executioner* of his *juſt judgement*: even that ſpirit, who *worketh powerfully in the children of diſobedience*, Epheſ. 2. 2. I adde one caution, leſt I might ſeem to ſpeak too harſhly and ſeverely of Gods proceeding, that God doth not proceed thus *judicially* preſently upon *every neglect* of his word, but after *long exerciſe* of his *patience*, and after *much obſtinacy*, and *wilful contempt* of his word. He did not preſently cut up the *fig-tree*, but expected three years, and upon importunity ſpared it one year more, *Luk.* 13. 8. God forſakes not *any* till they *obſtinately* forſake *him*: *non deſerit niſi deſerentem.* Chriſt did not preſently diſcharge himſelf of *Jeruſalem* but after many *calls* and *warnings* and *wilful*

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contempt of all theſe; *How oft would I have gathered thee, and thou wouldſt not*! Matth. 23.37. He warns *Epheſus* to *repent before he takes away the candleſtick*. Rev. 2.5. Let us then improve this time of *patience* and the Goſpel, while we enjoy it, leſt through the *hardneſs of our heart* under it, we *treaſure up wrath againſt the day of wrath*. Rom. 2.5.

The fifth General ground of unprofitable hearing is in reſpect of *Satan*, who doth what he can to make the word unprofitable, ſeveral ways and devices Satan hath to compaſs this end. Sometimes he is at your *elbow jogging* you *aſleep*, that men *ſleep away* a Sermon: ſometimes he *ſteals away* the word you have received, which our Saviour expreſſeth by *the ſeed that fell by the ways ſide*, Matth. 13.4, and 19. otherwhile he preſents your thoughts with the *glory*, and *greatneſs* of the world, and ſo they are *wandring* and *diſtracted*: ſometimes *begetting prejudices* in your hearts againſt the word, or the preacher of it, and ſo *diſaffecting* you to the truth preached: ſometimes *ſuggeſting ſuitable motions* and *temptations* to ſteal away your hearts from the word, as to the *voluptuous* mans *pleaſure*, to the *ambitious* man *honours*; ſo ſuiting their corruptions, and by that they prove careleſs to profit by the word. And the truth is, the more powerfull the word is, the more the devil oppoſes it; and the more the light of the Goſpel hath appeared, the more hath Satan ſent out the *ſmoke of the bottomleſs pit* to *obſcure* it; and therefore though the multitude of *hereſies* & *errours* which abound among us be real matter of a *lamentation*, as being a ſign that the devil hath ſet his *cloven foot* amongſt us; yet I cannot but from hence conclude, there is agreater power of *Goſpel-light*, which the devil thus endeavours to *extinguiſh*; it appears, that the *ſun* is *up*, that theſe *locuſts* ſwarm ſo. If now you ask me; why the devil ſo much oppoſes the word and Goſpel? I anſwer

I. *Becauſe himſelf hath no ſhare in it*: he is fallen irrecoverablely from God and as an ἀπολλύων, he endeavours to bring others into the ſame deſtruction with himſelf; he envied mans eſtate in *paradiſe*, and thought to have ruined him, but perceiving man by a *ſecond* covenant in a poſſibility of a better ſtate then that, he more envies his *recovery* which the Goſpel diſcovers and conveies, as being the Goſpel of *reconciliation*, and therefore he endeavours to make this ineffectual.

II. *Becauſe it is a means to ruin and demoliſh his kingdome*. The word of God is *mighty to throw down Satans ſtrong holds*, 2 Cor. 5.10. whereby he keeps poſſeſſion of the ſoul. As the walls of *Jericho* fell down at the noiſe of *rams horns*, ſo at the ſound of the Goſpel the walls of Satan fall down. Some ſtones out of *this brook* will conquer

our *Goliah:* this *ſword of the Spirit* conquers Satan, *Epheſ* 6.17. When Chriſt had ſent out his ſeventy diſciples to preach, the effect of it was; that Satan fell like *lightning out of heaven*, Luke 10. 18. that is, that power and dominion he exerciſed before in the world. This was one end for which God ſent *Paul* to the *Gentiles*, Acts 26. 17, 18. Hence it is that Satan employs all his *ſubtilty* and *ſtrength* againſt it; for where the word comes in power, the devil is a looſer by it: he looſeth a *ſubject* of his kingdome, who by the word is brought from under his obedience. While men remain his *ſubjects*, he lets them alone quietly, all is in peace while the *ſtrong man* keeps the houſe; but when the Goſpel comes to bring his ſubjects to the obedience of God, then he raiſeth all the force he can againſt it by himſelf and wicked men. He hath the poſſeſſion of our *corrupt hearts*, and therefore will not ſubmit to a diſ-poſſeſion without much reſiſtance. The Goſpel brings us from under Satans power by a pure conqueſt; for he will not deliver his right and poſſeſion upon terms. The devil looks upon it as his *intereſt* to oppoſe the Goſpel to uphold and ſecure his ovvn kingdome. Obſerve vvhat the Apoſtle ſays expreſſely to this, 2 *Cor* 4.4. *The God of this world hath blinded the eyes of them, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel ſhould ſhine unto them*: vvhen the Goſpel ſhines in his full luſtre, the devil endeavours to blinde men vvith *wilfull unbelief*, that they ſee it not. The *ultimate end* that Satan aims at in this is the ruine of their ſouls: and therefore, in order to it, is carefull, that they come not to the knovvledge of the truth, *without which is no ſalvation*, 1 Tim. 2.4. vvhich he knovvs they cannot do, vvithout the ſhining of the *light* of the Goſpel into their hearts, and therefore endeavours to hinder it vvhat he can. The *Prince of darkneſs* rules in dark ignorant ſouls, holds them by thoſe *chains of darkneſs*, and endeavours to ſhut their eyes, leſt by the *light of the Goſpel* they ſhould *diſcover* the *deluſions* by which he hath held them *captive*, and ſo theſe ſhould be taken from under his obedience: as in the day we diſcover the vanity of our *night-phantaſies*, *dreams* and *imaginations*. In a vvord, *Satan looſeth where the word profiteth, therefore he doth all he can to oppoſe it.*

To conclude with theſe brief directions, by the uſe of which we may become hearers with profit.

1. *Go to the word as the word, and for the word*, So thou meeteſt with the wholeſome word of God, regard not the dreſs it comes in: *Bonorum ingeniorum inſignis eſt indoles in verbis verum amare, non verba*; Auguſtin. Say thou, *Lord, here I come to thy word, nothing elſe will ſatisfie me, not huskes but bread in my fathers houſe.*

Aug. de doct. Chriſt. lib. 4. cap. 11.

2. *Come to the word as the means of ſalvation.* Were men convinced

vinced throughly of this, that their ſalvation was concerned in the word, they would certainly be more careful to profit. They who are ſoundly taught and inſtructed by the word of God: Εἰς ὕψος πτερῶν, as *Clemens* obſerves, they *mount up to heaven as on eagles wings.* Think with thy ſelf every Sermon thou comeſt to, *Now I come to further my ſalvation, my ſoul is concerned in this Ordinance, this Sermon will be but like Uriah's letter to me a meſſage of death, if I profit not by it:* did men come with theſe reſolutions, they could not but go away with profit. I ſhallconclude therefore with that of the Prophet, *Eſay.* 55. 3. *Incline your eare, and come unto me, hear* (but remember ſo to hear, as to profit by your hearing) *and your ſoul ſhall live, and I will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David.*

FINIS.

THE SEVERITIE AND IMPARTIALITIE OF DIVINE JUSTICE.

A Sermon preached before the JUDGES, at the Aſsiſe at *Cambridge*, July 25. *An. Dom.* 1654.

By JOHN FROST, *B. D.* late Fellow of S. *JOHNS* Colledge in *CAMBRIDGE.*

Juſtitia non novit patrem, non novit matrem, veritatem novit, perſonam non accipit, Deum imitatur. Caſſ. in Pſal.

CAMBRIDGE:
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Anno Dom. MDCLVII.

To the right

WORSHIPFULL

SIR

HENRY FELTON,

BARONET,

All increaſe of true Honour with God and man.

RIGHT WORSHIPFULL;

THere is ſtore of Sermons extant; the *Pulpit* ſcarce affordeth more then the *Preſs*: neither know I which is more advantageous. The ſound of the Word pierceth more; the letter written endureth longer: the voice extendeth but to ſome few preſent; the writing to many abſent, & the Authour, *though dead, yet ſpeaketh.* Here are two added to the number, and by the *relict* of the deceaſed preſented to the publick view: which I crave leave to honour with your name. Why I do ſo, I need not give account to the world, which alreadie knoweth your worth and deſerts; and ſhall know by this that I acknowledge them: beſides my ſpecial obligations to you for your favour to

me, and my ſon, unknown to the world. Sir, you were willing to have been his Patron whileſt he lived, be pleaſed now to vouchſafe the Patronage of this his *Poſthumous* iſſue: which I humbly commend to your care, and you, with your vertuous Ladie, to the grace of the Almightie, wiſhing you both all that little happineſs the earth can afford you, and fulneſs of glorie in heaven,

Your Worſhips

moſt humbly devoted,

JOHN FROST.

COLOS. 3. 25.

But he that doth wrong ſhall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no reſpect of perſons.

SOme of the ancients have charitably excuſed the Heathens *Polytheiſme*, by that probable conjecture, that they worſhipped not *divers* gods but *one* and the ſame, according to thoſe various *benefits* they received from him, or thoſe *divers apprehenſions* they had of him. As *Lipſius*, ſpeaking of the gods of the *Stoicks*, ſaith, they were rather *multitudo nominum* then *numinum*, *a multitude of names* rather *then of natures*. And *Auguſtine*, in his book *de civitate Dei*, brings in the Heathens pleading for themſelves, that *they were not ſo ridiculouſly ignorant as to think virtue, or fortune, and the reſt gods, but onely divers expreſsions of the ſame deity*. Which opinion may gain further probabilitie, if we conſider what unworthy, unſuitable apprehenſions men are apt to entertain of God. Moſt men (like that *Roman* painter *Arellius*, who was wont to draw the faces of all his images according to the likeneſs of that beautie which himſelf moſt affected) framing a god to themſelves, ſuitable to their own *carnal intereſts*, and *corrupt affections*, not conceiving of him as he is, and ſo truely making God an Idol. Thus ſome fancie a god to themſelves all of *juſtice*, breathing out nothing but *fire* and *brimſtone* againſt ſin, armed with nothing but vengeance and terrour, and they can by no means frame to themſelves one conception of his *mercy*; and this is the miſapprehenſion which the *humbled* & *deſpairing ſinner* lies under, who can ſpeak no other language of God, then that of *Job*, *The arrows of the Almightie are within me, the poiſon whereof drinketh up my ſpirit, the terrours of the Lord do ſet themſelves in array againſt me*. Others (which indeed is the more frequent, and the more dangerous miſtake) fancie to themſelves a *notion* of God as all *love* and *mercie*, all *tenderneſs* and *compaſsion*, in the mean time either through *unbelief* not crediting, or through *inadvertencie* not *actually* conſidering the *juſtice* of God; and this is the miſperſwaſion and errour of the *preſumptuous*, *ſecure ſinner*, and that which encourageth him to a conſtant and confident continuance

Lipſius diſſert. 9.

Lib. 4. de Civit. Dei, cap. 24.

Job 6. 4.

in ſin againſt God, and wronging his neighbour; this prompts and encourageth the *ſuperiour* to oppreſs his *inferiour*, and him to rebel againſt his *ſuperiour*. Therefore the Apoſtle here undertaking to preſs upon theſe *Coloſſians* a juſt and ſuitable deportment to every ſubordination God ſhall ſet them in, (which is the *relative* importance of the words:) having, *verſe* 24. allured them by the hopes of mercie, or a *reward*, he here perſwades them by the terrours of the Lords *juſtice* againſt thoſe, *who in any capacitie or rank whatſoever* (for ſo *Zanchy* extends the words) *wrongs or injures another. But he that doth wrong, ſhall receive for the wrong which he hath done*, &c.

As if he had ſaid:

Paraphr. *Let none lay aſide the belief of the juſtice of God, or encourage themſelves in ſin, by hopes of impunitie; let not the poor inferiour ſervant* (for the words are peculiarly ſpoken for the comfort of ſuch, by the general conſent of expoſitours) *repine deſpairingly, becauſe here perhaps he ſuffers wrongfully; nor yet the ſuperiour triumph proudly, becauſe he can at preſent oppreſs ſecurely, for there will come a time (though now the poor and inferiour are oppreſſed without relief, and great ones Tyrannize without controle, when he (be he Prince or Peaſant, honourable or deſpiſed, rich or poor) be he what he will be (theſe circumſtances of the perſons are not valued or conſidered by that impartial juſtice of God from which he) that doth wrong, ſhall receive for the wrong which he hath done*, &c.

The words you ſee are the deſcription of Gods *ſeveritie* againſt ſin; their terms may briefly be explained thus:

Ὁ ἀδικῶν) *He that doth wrong.* Ἀδικεῖν is the ſame with βλαπτειν, ſaith *Budæus*. Or if you will take the Philoſophers account of it, it is, τὸ βλάπτειν ἑκόντα παρὰ τὸν νόμον, *to injure another knowingly contrarie to ſome law*, either the ſuperiour law of God, or the ſubordinate (ſo far as juſt) laws of men, agreeing with the law *natural* and *eternal*; ſo that every ſin as it is ἀνομία, in the Apoſtles phraſe, 1 *John* 3. 4. ſo it is ἀδικία too, *a wrong to God, our neighbour, our ſelves*; and in this latitude I ſhall here conſider it.

Steph. ex Ariſt. Rhet.

Κομιεῖται) *Shall receive.* The word properly ſignifies ſuch a *receiving* as is by way of *return* or *recompence*: that is, *He ſhall have the juſt reward of that injurie whereby he wrongs another.*

Καὶ οὐκ ἔστι προσωποληψία) *Non perſonam ſignificat, ſed perſonæ attributa & circumſtantias: Stephan.* Scripture ſpeaks of God, as having a *gratious reſpect* to ſome men more then to others: *Jacob have I loved, and Eſau have I hated*, Rom. 9. 13. Thus God had reſpect to *Abel* not to *Cain*, Gen. 4. 4, 5. But the *perſons* here ſignifies the *outward circumſtances* and *qualifications* of men, thoſe which make men.

men glorious and valuable in the world, ſuch as Honour, Riches, Authoritie, Greatneſs, Learning, Parentage, Countrey, which are the admiration and terrour of men, yet can neither procure Gods favour for, nor ſecure the ſinner from the ſtroke of *Divine juſtice*. Which interpretation is evident from the context, and I ſhall further clear it anon.

Diviſion.

In the words thus opened, four particulars are conſiderable.

Firſt, *The indiſpenſable neceſsitie of juſtice*: κομιεῖται, *he ſhall receive*, it cannot be otherwiſe.

Secondly, *The equitie of Divine juſtice*: it is, ὃ ἠδίκησεν, That is, *pro gravitate peccati ſui*, ſaith *Paræus*: *According to the nature, and proportionably to the greatneſs of the injurie.*

Thirdly, *The extent and univerſalitie of Divine juſtice.* And that is double,

I. Of the *Perſon*, ὁ ἀδικῶν, Let him be what he will be.

II. Of the *Sin*, ὃ ἠδίκησε, What ever his ſin and injurie be.

Fourthly, *The impartialitie of Divine juſtice*; οὐ γάρ ἐστι, &c. *There is no reſpect of perſons.*

To which four particulars, if I may beg leave to ſpeak,

Firſt, *Abſolutely*, in themſelves:

Secondly, *Relatively*, as to the perſons engaged in the affairs of this day, I ſhall diſmiſs both the Text and Congregation. And

Firſt, Of the *indiſpenſableneſs* of juſtice upon thoſe who *do wrong*: *they ſhall receive.*

I. They may *lawfully* from the hand of the *civil* Magiſtrate.

II. They ſhall *certainly* from the hand of God.

I. They may *lawfully* from the hand of the *civil* Magiſtrate. The Apoſtle tells us, he is *Gods miniſter*, ἔκδικος εἰς ὀργὴν, *a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil*, Rom. 13.4. There are indeed a generation of men in the world, who *brand* all *juſtice* with the name of *crueltie*, and *Magiſtracie* with the titles of *Tyrannie* and *uſurpation*: ſome ſuch there were in the Apoſtles time; *Peter* tells us of ſome who *deſpiſe government, and ſpeak evil of dignities*, 2 *Pet.* 2.10. and *Jude* verſe 8. of ſuch whom he calls *filthy dreamers, who deſpiſe dominion*. The *Manichees* conceived that Magiſtracie was a conſtitution of their bad god; ſuch were the *Weigelians*, and *Swenkfeldians* of latter years, and ſuch are many amongſt us at this day: and if we obſerve them they are the very ſame men, who would pull the *ſword of the Spirit*, the *word* of God, out of the mouthes of Miniſters; who would wreſt the *ſword of juſtice* out of the hand of the Magiſtrate (the deſign ſure is, that ſo their *licentiouſneſs* might go unreproved by the one, and unpuniſhed by the other)

ther) onely here is the difference, though they have alreadie ſo far thrown off religion, as not to regard the one, yet they have not ſo far laid aſide the natural principle of ſelf-preſervation and policie, as not to fear the other. Truth is, they fear the Magiſtrates ſword is too edged a tool for them to meddle withall; they know that if they oppoſe it, they are like to feel it. It hath alwaies been ſo, that the Magiſtrates and Miniſtrie have had the ſame oppoſers; and the ſame principles of Pride, Faction and Ambition carrie men out to contemn both, as imagining themſelves too knowing to be taught by the one, or too good to be ruled by the other. It was thus of old; thoſe leading famous rebels, *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, gainſay and oppoſe as well *Moſes* the Magiſtrate, as *Aaron* the Prieſt: and think both of them *take too much upon them, to lift themſelves above the congregation of the Lord*, Numb. 16. 3. and therefore they both envie *Aaron* his Prieſthood, and *Moſes* his Authoritie; they will neither hear the one, nor obey the other, *v.* 12. And it is ſo ſtill; thoſe who now caſt dirt in the face of the Miniſters, would moſt certainly, if they had power and opportunitie, lay the Magiſtrates honour in the duſt, and crie down them as Tyrannical, as they now do theſe as *Antichriſtian*.

I queſtion not (*my Honourable Lords*) but we ſhall finde you readie and zealous (and the reſt of the Magiſtracie of this Nation) to aſſert the *ſword of the Spirit to us*, and I ſhall (I am confident as the mouth of all the *ſound* Miniſtrie of *England*) vindicate and aſſert the power of the *civil ſword to you*, and that upon theſe grounds; He that *doth wrong*, muſt receive from the hand of the *Magiſtrate:*

1. *That the Magiſtrate may faithfully diſcharge that office which God hath entruſted him withall.* God hath put a ſword into the Magiſtrates hands, and he expects he ſhould not *bear it vain*, Rom. 13. 4. not bear it for *honour* to *himſelf* onely, but for *terrour* to *offendours*, verſe 3. *Rulers are not a terrour to good works, but for evil.* He is not to wear it as a badge and enſign of Honour, but draw it as an inſtrument of Juſtice. It is the very end of his office: *Governours*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *are ſent by God*, there is their Commiſſion; if we would know the *end* wherefore, the next words reſolve us, they are ſent by him εἰς ἐκδίκησιν, *for the puniſhment of evil doers.* And it is this Divine Authoritie, which makes that juſtice in the Magiſtrate, which would be crueltie and murder in another. The wiſe God hath not entruſted *the ſword of juſtice* in the hands of every private man: how ſoon then would the whole world become an *Aceldama*, if every man might be the revenger of his own wrongs? Therefore God, who hath forbidden private Chriſtians to *avenge themſelves*,

1 Pet. 2. 14.

ſelves, Rom. 12.19. *Dearly beloved, avenge not your ſelves*, &c. yet *Chap.* 13.4. hath *authorized* the Magiſtrate with his Commiſſion to be *the avenger of wrath upon thoſe that do evil. Et quis obedientiam in crimen vocet?* ſaith *Auſtin* in this caſe, *Quis obſequium pietatis accuſet?*

Lib. 1. de civ. Dei, cap. 26.

2. *That he may acquit, and clear himſelf of the guilt of other mens ſins.* Thoſe ſins which the Magiſtrate, either out of Cowardize, or Partialitie, puniſheth not, he makes his own: and what men commit as encouraged by ſeeing others go unpuniſhed for the ſame ſinnes, (and ſure no *greater encouragement* to a licentious corrupt heart to ſin, then *hopes of impunitie*) the guilt certainly is devolved upon the Magiſtrate, who by puniſhing it in ſome ſhould have prevented it in others. *Camerarius* tells us of a wiſe anſwer, though made by a fool, to a King of *France*, who being ſolicited to give out a pardon for a murderer made this the ground of his denial, that it was the *third murder that man had committed*, *No, my Soveraign*, ſaith he, *it is but the firſt he hath committed: you committed the ſecond, and the third*, *Nam ſi primi veniam illi non dediſſes unicum illud commiſiſſet.* It was his firſt pardon which made him promiſe himſelf ſecuritie, and ſo encouraged him to commit the like ſinne.

Camerar. pag. 469.

It is the *charge* God laies upon the Princes of *Judah*, Iſa. 1.23. that they were *companions of thieves*, that is, *coercendis & puniendis furtis operam non impendebant*, ſaith *Calvin*, *They did not endeavour to reſtrain and puniſh them, and therefore are interpreted as partners with them.* Famous is that ſtorie of *Ludovicus*, one of the Kings of *France*, to this purpoſe, who being at his devotions was ſolicited to pardon a Malefactour condemned to die; he, as willing to ſhake off ſuch an unſeaſonable importunitie, granted the requeſt; but ſuddenly meeting with that paſſage of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Bleſſed are they that keep judgement, and he that doth righteouſneſs at all times*, recalled the Malefactour, and revoked his former grant of mercie upon this reaſon, *Principem, qui punire poteſt crimen, nec punit, non minùs coram Deo reum eſſe, quàm ſi id ipſe perpetrâſſet*: *that Prince or Magiſtrate, which can, and will not puniſh ſin, is in the judgement, and ſight of God as guiltie of it, as if he had commited it.* There are no men in the world more guiltie of other mens ſins, then Miniſters and Magiſtrates, the firſt by not reproving, the other by not puniſhing.

Calv. in loc.

Camer. ibid.

Pſal. 106.3.

3. *In faithfulneſs to the offendour*: to him that doth wrong, the Magiſtrate by puniſhing him may do him a real courteſie (as certainly they did the *thief* who condemned him to the ſame Croſs with our Saviour) and his receiving puniſhment by the hand of the

the Magiſtrate may be a means of his repentance (for δίκη ἡ σὺν ἀ ψυχὴν ἰατρεία, ſaith *Plutarch*) and ſo prevent his receiving it from the juſt hand of God. Magiſtrates in Scripture are oft called *Fathers*, as *Pater patriæ* among the *Romans*; and we know what *Solomon* ſaith of them, *Prov.* 13. 24. *He that ſpareth his rod, hateth his ſon:* and *ſeveritie* and *juſtice* againſt the *ſin*, may oft in the event prove *mercie* to the *ſinner*: but however, *He that doth wrong ſhall receive*, &c.

4. *In order to the common and publick ſecuritie, that by one mans puniſhment others may fear to ſin.* Which is the account *Moſes* gives of Gods appointment of *capital* puniſhments under the judicial law: as the *ſeducer from the true worſhip of God* was by Gods command to be *ſtoned*, Deut. 13. 10. and the end is expreſſed, *verſe* 11. *that all Iſrael might hear and fear, and do no more ſuch wickedneſs.* And the *falſe witneſs* to be puniſhed, *Deut.* 19. 19, 20. *That thoſe which remain may no more commit any ſuch evil amongſt you.* That which is a puniſhment to one becomes a terrour to all. Beſides, puniſhments are neceſſarie for the protection of weak and unarmed innocencie; to which Magiſtrates are, or ſhould be, a refuge and ſhelter; and which is chief, for the ſecuritie and defence of the Laws, which would be every villains ſcorn and deriſion, if they were not *hedged in with thorns* (as I may ſay) and ſecured by puniſhments. For though the moſt ingenuous principle of *obedience* be *love*, yet the moſt common principle is *fear*: and thoſe who will not for *conſcience ſake*, as the Apoſtle commands, *Rom.* 13. 5. *conform* to the Laws, yet will for *wraths ſake*, for fear of puniſhment: and many whom *Religion* will not, *Policie* will oblige to obedience. God ſees it neceſſarie to ſecure his own Laws by annexing puniſhments to them: mans corrupt nature is become now *ſervile*, and with thoſe in *Pſal.* 2. 3. would think of *breaking all bands in ſunder*, and *caſting away the cords* of Gods commands *from them*, did they not fear as it follows there, *v.* 9. to *be bruiſed with the rod of iron.*

Many keep Gods Laws more out of fear of Hell, then out of any love to Holineſs: and much more invalid will any humane Laws be without puniſhments annexed. If men could promiſe themſelves ſecuritie from the puniſhment which the Law threatens, they would quickly indulge themſelves the libertie of violating what the Law commands. I like not indeed *Draco's* Laws, which were ſo cruel, that they were ſaid to be *written in bloud*, not with *ink*; nor approve of *Caligula's* decrees, which were termed *furores, non judicia*: and ſurely capital puniſhments, ſhould then onely be inflicted, when the Laws cannot be ſecured, nor the publick ſafe-

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tie and peace preſerved without them. But without ſome puniſhment, neither can be ſafe; the Magiſtrates authoritie would be contemned, and the Laws, like Cobwebs, ſwept down by every hand: and therefore thoſe ſame men (I mean the *Socinians* and others) who inveigh againſt all *puniſhments* (eſpecially, if *capital*) as a *breach of charitie*, charge the Laws too, as a violation of *Chriſtian libertie*: theſe are timely to be looked too. Magiſtrates in Scripture are called *Phyſitians*; it is a cruel pitie in a *Phyſitian*, to ſpare an ounce or two of corrupt bloud, and thereby endanger the *health* of the whole bodie. A *Gangren'd* member muſt be cut off, that the whole be not corrupted, *immedicabile vulnus enſe reſcindendum eſt, Nè pars ſincera trahatur*; ſo muſt a corrupt member of the *Common-wealth*: and however this may ſeem crueltie to the Offendour, yet, I am ſure, it is mercie and pitie to the Publick, which can oft no otherwaies be ſecured and preſerved from danger. Iſa. 3. 6, 7.

By this time, I hope, you ſee the Magiſtrates right to puniſh them who *do wrong*; but leſt the great *Nimrods* of the world might here take ſanctuarie, and becauſe of their own *power* or *policie*, or of the Magiſtrates *cowardize* or *partialitie*, they may hope to eſcape the *ſtroke* of the *civil* ſword, and ſo be encouraged to tyrannize and wrong others, let them know they ſhall certainly receive at the hand of God *for what ever wrong they do*, &c. that brings me to the

II. *The indiſpenſabilitie of divine juſtice.* A truth very neceſſarie to be demonſtrated, becauſe though the worſt of *Atheiſts* fear it, (*a clap of thunder* ſtrikes a *Caligula* under his bed, as fearing the ſtroke of a *revenging juſtice*, and a diſcourſe of it ſtrikes a cruel *Felix* into a *fit of trembling*) yet many would go for Chriſtians, who do not believe it, or at leaſt do not expreſs the power of ſuch a perſwaſion in their lives. Would there be ſo many *mightie Nimrods*, *hunters* after their neighbours eſtates and lives? ſo many *unjuſt Ahabs* and the like? if they really believed they ſhould receive for that wrong they do, from the hand of an *indiſpenſable impartial juſtice*? Truth is, men muſt offer violence to the principles of natural conſcience (in which there are ſtrong *impreſſions* of this truth, as being that δικαίωμα τῦ Θεῦ, that *judgement of God*, which the Apoſtle ſaith the Heathen, though *given over to a reprobate ſenſe*, had a knowledge of) before they can caſt off all *thoughts* and *jealouſies* of a *revenging juſtice*: but few live under the actual belief of it; the *fear* of it ſcares them, but the *belief* of it doth not reclaim them. Truth is, moſt men have many *carnal prejudices* againſt it; as, *to do thus is the mode of the world*; and, *I ſhall eſcape as well as others*; and, *not to do it will croſs my gain and profit*; and, that which indeed is Rom. 1. 28, 32.

the chief, and makes moſt *Atheiſts*, is *preſent proſperitie*: they can do *wrong* and yet *thrive* and *proſper*: and this makes many think God rather likes and approves of the ſin, then intends to puniſh the ſinner. *Thou thoughteſt*, ſaith God, *Pſal.* 50.21. *that I was ſuch a one as thy ſelf, but I will reprove thee.* As that Tyrant *Dionyſius*, as *Valerius Maximus* tells us, when he had robbed the temple of *Proſerpina*, having a ſafe voyage at ſea, *videtiſne*, ſaith he, *quàm bona navigatio ab ipſis diis immortalibus ſacrilegis tribuitur?* as if he had ſaid, *See how the gods love ſacriledge.* I ſhall therefore endeavour, hoping to give a check to ſin, eſpecially to *injuſtice* and *wrong*, to demonſtrate the *indiſpenſabilitie* of Divine juſtice in three or four particulars.

Val. Max. lib. 1. cap. 1.

1. *From Gods abſolute indiſpenſable hatred of ſin*: the principle and riſe of which is not his *revealed will*, but his *nature*; he *is of purer eyes then to behold iniquitie*, Heb. 1. 13. God hates ſin not onely as a breach of his Law, but as a contrarietie to his *nature* and *holineſs*; he may as ſoon not *be God*, as not *hate ſin*; and what is *hatred* in God, but *voluntas puniendi*? not any *paſsion* or *perturbation*: as *Aquinas* ſaith, all the *affections* of men are attributed to God, *quoad effectum, non affectum*: and what is the *effect* of *anger*, and *hatred* in us, but a deſire of *revenge* and *puniſhment*? ſo in God it ſpeaks his *indiſpenſable* will to puniſh. The Poets attribute to Juſtice, Βραδέα πέδα, *ſlow feet*: ſo *ſlow* is *Divine juſtice*, that ſometimes it overtakes not a ſinner in this life (Βραδεῖ ποδὶ τοῖς πονηροῖς ὀπιπτεύει ἡ δίκη, ſaith *Plutarch*) but it will ſooner or later reach him. God, ſaith *Auguſtin*, *puniſheth ſome ſinnes here, that men may not queſtion his providence: not all, leſt he ſhould wholly anticipate the laſt judgement.* But it ſeems to me impoſſible, but God ſhould ſooner or later puniſh ſin, which he ſo naturally hates and abhors; therefore calls it in the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *that abominable thing which his ſoul hates.*

Aug. lib. de civ. Dei, c. 8.

Jer. 44. 4.

2. *To vindicate his glory, and repair his honour, which ſin robs him of.* He is a jealous God, namely of his *honour*: God will have his *glorie* from every man one way or other; thoſe that will not glorifie him by *doing his will*, God will glorifie himſelf upon them by *puniſhing* them againſt their own. The obedience of the whole creation, being a preſent debt, can never make reparation for that diſhonour the leaſt ſinne brings to God: God will therefore repair it by glorifying his juſtice upon their diſobedience: and ſo make them bear the ſeveritie of his juſtice, who would not ſubmit to the juſtneſs of his commands.

Exod. 20. 5.

3. *To aſſert his dominion over the creature.* Every ſin is a throwing off, and diſowning the Soveraigntie of God, and affecting an *independencie* upon him. The firſt ſin was uſhered in thus by our *firſt parents*,

parents ambitiouſly affecting, and credulouſly believing what the devil moſt falſly promiſed them; *to be like Gods. Thoſe mine enemies that would not I ſhould reign over them*, &c. *That would not*; this is the language of every wilfull ſin, it is *virtually* a laying aſide the rule and authoritie of God, with that proud *Pharaoh*, *Who is the Lord that I ſhould obey his voice?* Or, as thoſe in the *Pſalmiſt*, *Let us caſt away his cords from us.* As if they ſhould ſay; we will be ruled by our own laws, and not be bound up to any *ſuperiour* commands: and thus *interpretatively* deny their *dependance* and *ſubordination* to God. God can no other way maintain his *dominion* over them, then by *puniſhing*, which they have endeavoured to caſt off by ſinning. As a Prince cannot keep up and preſerve his rule and dominion over his ſubjects otherwiſe, then by puniſhing them if they turn rebels: ſo God upholds his dominion, by puniſhing thoſe who acknowledge not his *Soveraignty* in *commanding*: and he that chooſeth to obey his own will in ſinning, ſhall be ſubordinate to *Gods ſoveraignty* in *ſuffering*. But,

Gen. 3. 5. Luke 19. 27.

Exod. 5. 2. Pſal. 2. 3.

4. Laſtly, and particularly, as to the caſe of wrong and injurie, God will certainly puniſh, *to aſſert and clear up his Saints innocencie*, which here in the world is oft trodden upon by the foot of pride and tyrannie; which the Apoſtle to the *Theſſalonians* mentions as an argument of juſt dealing with our brethren, *Let no man go beyond, or defraud his brother in any matter, becauſe the Lord is the avenger of all ſuch*, 1 Theſſ. 4. 6. The Poets feign Juſtice to be the daughter of *Jupiter*, whom he hath ſet over the world to revenge thoſe injuries one man does to another: I am ſure God (if he doth not in this life *plead the cauſe of the oppreſſed*, as ſometimes he doth) hath appointed a day in which his juſtice ſhall puniſh them, who here unjuſtly puniſh his. *It is* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 Theſſ. 1. 6.) *a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled peace.* You may ſee, perhaps, the proud *Neroes*, and *Caligulaes* of the world *treading ſtately*, and proudly *vaunting, commanding, threatning* upon the *ſtage* of the world (as Emperours in ſome few *Scenes* of a *Tragœdie*) but if we ſtay to the *laſt act*, we ſhall ſee their Scarlet double-dyed in bloud; or if innocencie be thrown, and perſecuted off the ſtage before the act be ended, there will come a time when the *righteous ſhall rejoyce to ſee the vengeance*; and *waſh his feet in the bloud of the wicked*, thoſe which here oppreſs and wrong him, ſaying with the *Pſalmiſt*, *Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.*

Pſal. 58. 11.

II. The *equitie* of God's judicial proceedings; it is, ὁ ἰσόνομος. God's *juſtice* laies out divers and various puniſhments according

cording to the nature, degree, qualitie, and circumſtances of mens ſins. This is that which Scripture ſpeaks of ſo frequently: *God will render to every man according to his deeds*, Rom. 2. 6. *every one ſhall receive according to that he hath done*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. κομιύμενοι μισθὸν ἀδικίας, *receiving the reward of unrighteouſneſs*, 2 Pet. 2. 13. *God ſhall cauſe every man to finde according to his waies*, Job 34. 11. And indeed it cannot be otherwiſe; for *ſhall not the judge of all the world do right?* ſaith *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 25. he can do nothing but *right*; the creature is under ſuch an abſolute ſubordination to the *Soveraigntie* and *dominion* of God, being in *his hand* as *clay in the* Rom. 9. 11. *hand of the potter*, (which is Scripture language) that it is not capable of receiving any wrong from God; and God's holy will is ſo *abſolute independent* a rule, and ſquare of all righteouſneſs and equitie, that he cannot do any injurie to the creature. *Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?* ſaith the Apoſtle to the *Romans*, Rom. 3. 5. Indeed there may be ſome ſeeming inequalitie in Gods judicial proceedings here in the world: Providences here are oft ſo intricate (like *Ezekiel's wheels* moving one within another) ſuch *unequal diſtributions* of *rewards* and *puniſhments*, the righteous oft ſuffering, while the wicked flouriſh, that ſome have from hence taken occaſion to quarrel with the Juſtice, and deny the Providence of God. But be ſure God's ways are alwaies juſt, when moſt ſecret; and it will become the modeſtie and humilitie of a creature (though Rom. 11. 23. God's *judgements are unſearchable, and his ways paſt finding out*) yet to acknowledge with *David*, that *the Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*: and where we cannot fathom to crie, ὦ βάθος, *oh the depth!* and at that laſt great day, that ἡμέρα ἀποκαλύψεως ϗ δικαιοκρισίας τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the day of the revelation of the righteous judgement of God*, as the Apoſtle calls it, *Rom.* 2. 5. then God will unriddle all his *myſterious providences*, & vindicate all his proceedings from the imputation of injuſtice, which here the ignorance or malice of men may charge them with. Then we ſhal diſcern, as the Prophet Mal. 3. 18. *Malachy* ſaith (though here, perhaps, we cannot) *between the righteous and the wicked, between him that ſerveth God, and him that ſerveth him not*. God lays not out equal puniſhments for unequal ſins, but at the laſt day there ſhall be a *tolerabilius*, a more tolerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon*, for ſome ſinners, then for others.

III. *The univerſality of Gods juſtice*, both as to *perſons* and *ſins*. Rom. 14. 10, 12. *We muſt all*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *ſtand before the judgement-ſeat of Chriſt, and every one ſhall give an account of himſelf to God*. Οὐκ ἂν λαθὼν διαφύγοι ἢ βιασάμενος, ſaith *Plutarch*. The moſt hardned, proud, ſtout-hearted *Pharaoh* cannot withſtand the *meaneſt* inſtrument of *Divine juſtice*, if armed with Gods *Commiſſion*; the *guilty malefa-*

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ſtour may many ways eſcape the ſtroke of *civil* juſtice; perhaps he can *conceal* the fact from the *knowledge* of the *Judge*; but no hiding any ſin from the eyes of *omniſcience* (as the ſinner oft deſires, and ſometimes is ſo far deluded, as to think he can do it, and thereby is encouraged to ſin more confidently). Πάντα τετραχηλισμένα, *All things are anatomized and open to the eyes of him, with whom we have to do*, ſaith the Apoſtle, Heb. 4. 13. and, *He ſets our moſt ſecret ſins in the light of his countenance*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, Pſal. 90. 8. Well, but if the malefactour be *convinced* of the fact, he may *break* priſon, and *flee*; but whither ſhall a *guilty* ſinner flee to eſcape Gods juſtice? *If I go into heaven, thou art there*, Pſal. 139. 8. but thither he is not like to come; for *there enters nothing that worketh abomination*, Rev. 21. 27. If he goes into hell, there juſtice finds him, *God is there alſo*, ſaith *David*; yea, there as a moſt ſevere Judge. In earthly judicatories, the perſon may be guilty, yet may eſcape the cenſure of the law for want of witneſs to prove the fact; but God, when he judgeth, ſummons in the ſinners own conſcience, which is inſtead of a thouſand witneſſes, ſo he is αὐτοκατάκριτος, *ſelf-condemned*, and ἀναπολόγητος, *wholly without excuſe*. Here many, though guilty enough, yet by their power or greatneſs have out-grown *civil* juſtice, and are too big to be meddled with, ſuch ſhall eſpecially receive from the hands of God. S. *John* ſaw in the *Revelations*, *the great as well as the ſmall ſtand before Gods tribunal*; and *judged according to their works*. Rev. 20. 12.

The wrongs that Magiſtrates and great ones do to others here, as being moſt exemplary, directly contrary to the end of their office; for which they muſt be accountable to God, and forfeiting that truſt God hath repoſed in them to right others, and as being ſuch, for which they ſeldome receive any puniſhment from the hands of men, God will moſt certainly and ſeverely puniſh. Here it is poſsible, the Judge may be terrified by greatneſs, or corrupted by money or favour, to be partial in the execution of juſtice; but God *nec terretur potentiâ, nec flectitur gratiâ, is neither ſcared by power, nor prevailed with by favour*; but *he that doth wrong ſhall receive for the wrong, &c.*

And laſtly, here the ſin may be ſuch, as the law takes no *cognizance* of: *de minutis non curat lex*, and *cogitationis pœnam in foro noſtro nemo luit*: but the *leaſt* ſin ſhall fall under the *Cenſure* of *Divine* juſtice. Every *idle word* muſt be *accounted* for, every *ſecret* and *vain thought*; *God*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *ſhall judge the ſecrets of men according to my Goſpel*. Our Saviour lays him who wrongs his brother by an *immoderate paſsion*, *unworthy language*, or the like, open to, and in danger of *hell*-fire. God is eſpecially a *ſwift witneſs* againſt thoſe that *oppreſs others*, that *wrong* and *injure* their *brethren*. Scripture affords Mat. 12. 36. Rom. 2. 16. Mat. 5. 22. Mal. 3. 5.

affords us many *ſad* monuments, and *ſignal* inſtances of Gods juſtice againſt ſuch: *Ahab* gets *Naboths* vineyard and *the dogs lick his bloud.* How *ſudden* and *ſevere* was Gods juſtice upon *Ananias* and *Sapphira's* ſacrilege? the conſideration of which might juſtly make many in our days tremble. How were *Daniels* falſe accuſers made a prey to thoſe *lions*, to whoſe cruelty he by their *falſe witneſs* was condemned? I wiſh all that are intereſſed in the employment of *witneſſes* this day would conſider this & tremble, for certainly *the falſe witneſs ſhall not go unpuniſhed*, Prov. 19. 5. So for *bribery*, what got *Gehazi* by *Naamans* gifts, but his *leproſie* to *him* and *his poſterity?*

1 Kings 22. 38. Acts 5.

2 Kings 5.

IV. *The impartiality of Gods proceedings*; God is no *reſpecter of perſons.*

1. *Not in the communications of his mercy:* this the Apoſtle *Peter* affirms with much earneſtneſs: *of a truth*, ſaith he, Acts 10. 34, *I perceive that God is no reſpecter of perſons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteouſneſs is accepted with him:* and the Apoſtle, ſure, ſpoke this *experimentally*, who of a poor *fiſherman* was accepted to be an *Apoſtle.* Truth is, there is nothing which God more *hates*, or which Scripture more *induſtriouſly* frees God from then this *accepting perſons*: yet nothing, which the proud corrupt reaſon of man (which the Apoſtle juſtly calls ἔχθρα εἰς Θεὸν, *enmitie againſt God*) more ordinarily chargeth God with. If God from eternity chooſeth one, leaves another; if in time he confers his grace on one, which he denies to another; gives one aſſiſtance to perſevere, leaves another to the apoſtaſie of his own heart: preſently one *Engliſh Arminius* and others cry out, he is a *moſt ſhamefull accepter of perſons*, *unjuſt*, and what not? I wiſh theſe men would give God that freedome, which ſure themſelves would, and every man may enjoy without imputation of *injuſtice* and *partiality*; to wit, to beſtow when, and where he will, and upon whom he will, what he hath an *abſolute intereſt* in, and *right* to: ſo, is it not lawful with God to do what he will with his *own?* Is thy *eye evil* becauſe God is *good?* by theſe mens good will, God ſhould neither have the *ſoveraignty* of his *councels*, nor the *freedome* of beſtowing his *graces.* I wiſh theſe men would conſider the truth of that, *in gratuitis non datur acceptio perſonarum:* ſurely a man is unjuſtly charged with partiality for giving that to one, which he is not bound to give to any; for *accepting of perſons* is a *ſin againſt diſtributive juſtice*; *& locum habet in iis quæ dantur ex debito*, ſaith *Aquinas.* Now God is no mans *debtour*, and in giving his *grace* to ſome he doth no *wrong* to others, becauſe he might have denied it to all: God may *ſilence* ſuch *reaſonings* as hee did the *murmuring labourer*, who quarrel'd with him for

Rom. 8. 7.

Aquin. in Rom. 2. 11.

for giving the other a penny; Matth. 20. 13. *Friend I do thee no wrong.* God, in the *distribution* of his graces, *acts* not as a *Judge* but as a *Lord*: and the *motives* of it are not any outward, undue *circumstances* of the *persons*, but merely his own *will*, *dividing to every man severally as he pleaseth*, &c. *working all things after the counsel of his own will:* as a *demonstration* of which he oft bestowes his grace upon those who as to *humane* judgement seem most *unlike*, and *unqualified*; witness a persecuting, blaspheming, *Saul*; a licentious *Mary Magdalen*; an unjust, injurious *thief*; it will *puzzle* the sharpest wit to finde any other *motive* and ground of this then the *soveraignty* and *good pleasure* of God, unless they will say *blasphemie* and *uncleanness* be *qualifications* for grace. Surely, God doth this, as thereby to *reap* the greater *glory* of his grace, so to *shew* his *freedome* and *absoluteness* in communicating it. *Gods bestowing his grace* (saith *Aquinas* soundly and excellently) *is datio pertinens ad liberalitatem, non ad justitiam, a gift not of debt but of grace and liberality*, and in such there can be no *respect of persons*. God in this regards not the *outward qualities* and *circumstances* of men; not *greatness* or *learning*; for *not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, or noble are called*; but hath respect to his own *counsel* and *purpose*, and that must stand. *I will have mercy on whom I will* &c. *Rom.* 9. 15. And if *proud* reason (as it is usual) charge this as *arbitrariness* and *tyranny*: that in *Job* may silence it, *Is it fit to say to a King thou art wicked? and to princes ye are ungodly? how much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more then the poor? for they are all the work of his hands.* And I shall say with S. *Augustine*, *scrutetur qui potest profundum, veruntamen caveat præcipitium:* while he *quarrels* with and *pries* into the *counsels* and *secrets* of heaven, let him beware he falls not into the *depths* of hell.

1 Cor. 12. 11 Ephes. 1. 11.

Aquin. 2a. 2æ q. 63. art. 3.

1 Cor. 2. 26.

Job 34. 18, 19.

2. *Not in the executions of his justice:* but whom that finds under the *same guilt*, it condemns to the *same punishment*. This the Apostle asserts, 1 Pet. 1. 17. *Who without respect of persons judgeth according to every mans works:* and the Apostle to the *Romanes*, Rom. 2. 9, 10, 11. *Tribulation and anguish to every soul that doth evil, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; for there is no respect, &c.* Yet each of these had what to plead; the *Gentile* his *ignorance*, the *Jew* his *priviledges* as *Gods peculiar:* but justice *spares* them not, because they *enjoyed* them, but *punished* them more severely, because they *contemned* and *abused* them: it is πρῶτον Ἰουδαίου, *of the Jew first*, at the ninth verse of that second chapter to the *Romanes*. The *Gentiles* punishment shall be less, ὐκ ἔχει κατηγοροῦντα τὸν νόμον, saith *Chrysostome* on the place, *because they have not the law accusing them.* It is not the *enjoyment* of *Ordinances*, and *outward priviledges*, which the

Chrysost. in loc.

Jews

Jews rested in, and which (I fear) is the *rotten foundation* which too many *Christians* build upon, which will *secure* a sinner from the *stroke* of an *impartial justice*; but if *contemned* and *mis-improved* will make it *heavier*. The *Jews* rested in their *outward circumcision* as their *security*, but *Moses* bids them *circumcise their hearts*, & that upon this ground that, *God was a terrible God, which regardeth not persons*. No *outward* circumstances of the *person* can over-ballance this *impartial* justice; not a mans *greatness* & *honour*, these too oft *aggravate* his *sin*, and *increase* his *punishment*. *Magistrates* sins are of a *deep die*, *scarlet* sins, and will provoke a severer justice: ἀδρὰν ἐνταῦθα χώραν τὰ ἀξιώματα ἔχει, saith *Chrysostome*: *In Gods judgement greatness of person is inconsiderable*. The *Angelical* excellency could not secure or exempt them from the *severity* of Gods justice, they *are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgement of the great day*, Jude *6*.

Hebr. 2. 3.

Deut. 10. 16 17.

Chrysost. in Rom. 2. 9.

Nor will *riches* profit in the day of Gods wrath; as God dislikes not *holiness* though under rags, so he approves not sin under the gayest coat; nor will patronize profaneness, and wrong under Princes robes and crowns. *He accepteth not the person of princes, nor the rich man more then the poor*; in the place of *Job* before cited. *Lazarus*'s rags make him ne're the less fit or welcome guest into *Abrahams* bosome; nor can all *Dives* his pomp, and wealth, and delicious fare, secure him from the *sentence* of justice, dooming him to *eternal flames*. God likes neither the one better for his riches, nor the other the worse for his poverty. All a wicked mans riches purchase for him onely a hotter place in hel, (at *Rome* indeed they may perhaps buy him a pardon) and but *treasure up wrath*; *their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord*.

Job 34. 19.

Jam. 5. 2.

Ezek. 17. 19.

Nor will a wicked *Achitophels policy* secure him; you know it hastned his ruine here, and will increase it hereafter. Nor shall the great Scholars *learning* (if without holiness, and doing the will of God) at the day of Gods judgement avayl him any more but to increase his *stripes*. *Surgunt indocti, & rapiunt cœlum*, was an old and a sad complaint of the *Father*. Nay, that *best piece* of *learning*, to *teach others*, will not stay the hand of justice, if such be *workers of iniquity*. Many will come at the last day with that plea, *We have propheſied in thy name*, who yet shall be dispatched with a *Nescio vos*, *I know you not, depart from me ye workers of iniquity*. All the fair shews and appearances, the affected garbs, and hypocritical personating Religion, (if without the *power of godliness*) will not then be considerable, any further then to bring upon mens heads κείμα περισσότερον, *greater damnation*, as our Saviour told those arch-hypocrites

Luke 12. 47.

Matth. 7. 23.

the

the *Phariſees*, Matth. 23. 14. *Adams fig-leaves* will not ſecure him from the ſummons of Gods juſtice: the paint of hypocriſie falls off at the fire of Gods wrath. That of *Chryſoſtome* is full to this purpoſe; Οὐ προσώπων ποιότητα ἀλλὰ πραγμάτων ἐξετάζει διαφοράν, *God will judge at the laſt day not according to the qualitie of the perſons, but the difference of the actions*, whether good or bad; therefore God is deſcribed by S. *John* at the *laſt judgement*, as *ſitting upon a great white throne*; which ſpeaks both glory and purity; no ſpot of injuſtice or partiality in it, but (as at the words following) both *ſmall and great* are *judged*, every one *according to his works*.

Chryſoſt. in Rom. 2. 11.

Rev. 20. 11.

Ibid. v. 12.

And now give me leave (Right Honourable) with that modeſt humility as becomes my years, and yet with that holy boldneſs as befits my Office, to urge the imitation of this *Divine juſtice* upon you. I ſhall endeavour to do it ſo, that I may ſeem neither to forget *to whom*, nor yet *from whom* I ſpeak. God hath put *his* work into *your* hands: you are *in the place of God* to the people, you judge *for him*, you have the *ſtamp* of *his authority* upon you, he hath honoured you with his name, *I have ſaid ye are gods*; wherefore judge as he does. *Arnobius* tells the heathens, that their *gods* were ſuch, *quorum ſimiles nec vos eſſe, nec alium quempiam velitis; as they were aſhamed either themſelves or others ſhould imitate*: but Scripture repreſents God to us as a *pattern* for our *imitation*; *Be ye holy as I am holy, and perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect*. Imitate him as *Chriſtians*, much more as *Magiſtrates*. Imitate his *vindicative* juſtice; which is ſometimes in Scripture called his *holineſs*: and herein imitate,

Application.

Gen. 50. 19.

Pſal. 82. 1.

Arnob. pag. 190.

Matth. 5.

Joſh. 24. 19.

Firſt, *The equity of his juſtice*, by *proportionating* puniſhments to the *nature* of the offence; to puniſh *leſs* then the fact deſerves, may be of bad conſequence to the publick; to puniſh *more* ſeverely then it deſerves, is always *injuſtice* to the offendour; ſo far *innocency* it ſelf ſuffers, as any man is puniſhed beyond the *demerit* of his offence. The *Romane faſces* were a *bundle* of *rods*, with an *axe* in the midſt, to ſignifie the *equity* of *Magiſtrates* in puniſhing ſome onely with a *rod*, others with the *axe*: the one for *leſſer* faults, the other for *capital* crimes.

Secondly, *The univerſality of his juſtice*. Let not any wrong go unpuniſhed, whether it be in mens *good names* (which to ſome are of as great concernment as their *lives*) by *defamation*; in their *eſtates*, by *injury*, *robbery*, and *oppreſſion*; or in their *lives*, by *murder*; or in all theſe by *falſe accuſations* and *witneſſes*. But I mention this head that I may commend to your juſtice eſpecially the *wrongs* of God; thoſe which more *immediately* ſtrike at his *honour* & his *glory*. *My Lords*, God is very *ſevere* in revenging the wrongs done to you,

2 Pet. 2. 9, 10. when the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks of Gods *reſerving the wicked to the day of judgement to be puniſhed*, he uſhers this in with a μάλιστα, *chiefly* them who *deſpiſe government*, and *are not afraid to ſpeak evil of dignities*. And when the people would have rejected *Samuel* from being *Judge*; ſaith God, *they have not rejected thee, but me*. He interprets injuries done to *you*, as done to *himſelf*; and therefore you have all the reaſon in the world to be ſenſible of, and zealous in puniſhing thoſe wrongs which are done to God. Let me expoſtulate a little: Shall the leaſt *diſhonourable* word againſt an *earthly Potentate* be puniſhed? and ſhall thoſe foul-mouth'd *Rabſhakehs*, who reproach the *living God* by horrid *blaſphemies*, go ſecure and unobſerved? Shall an affront to an *Embaſſadour* be juſtly cenſured as an indignitie to the *Prince*; and ſhall thoſe who *ſcorn*, *defame*, *injure*, and *evil entreat* the *Embaſſadours* of God, (who come to them upon *terms* of *peace* and *reconciliation* from him) as *carnal* and *Anti-chriſtian*, not be looked upon as wronging God himſelf, and dealt withall accordingly? I am ſure Chriſt eſteems them ſo; *He that deſpiſeth you*, ſaith he, Luke 10. 16. *deſpiſeth me*, &c. Shall an *inſurrection* in the *State* (and that juſtly too) be puniſhed as *rebellion*? and ſhall thoſe who are up in *open arms* againſt God, and bid *defiance* to his *Ordinances*, *Word*, *Miniſters* (which have been the *glory* and *happineſs* of the Chriſtian world for this ſixteen hundred years) eſcape without the leaſt cenſure? Shall a *thief*, who ſteals to the value of a few pence endanger his life? and ſhall others *rob* God *ſecurely*, and *without danger*? If you ask how that is, not I, but the Prophet *Malachi* ſhall reſolve you; *In tithes*, ſaith he, *and offerings*. In a word, ſhall *ſchiſme* and *faction* in the *State* be puniſhed as *rebellion*? and ſhall *open hereſie* (I ſpeak not of *circumſtantial* opinions) in the Church be tolerated under the calmer title of tenderneſs? I muſt beg a παῤῥησία. I cannot imagine what plea can be rationally made for this; either we muſt ſay, *The Magiſtrate is not intereſted in the care of Religion*, and that's directly contrary both to Scripture *practiſe*, and *precept*; the Apoſtle making this the very argument why we ſhould *pray for all that are in authority*, that *we may live not onely peaceably, but in all godlineſs alſo*. It is, certainly, the Magiſtrates duty to preſerve Religion, as well as keep the Peace. Or elſe we muſt ſay, that no Hereſie wrongs God, and that is to make Religion an *indifferency*, and to cut the ſinews of all endeavours after truth. What think you of thoſe damnable Hereſies, which *Peter* ſpeaks of? Even *denying the Lord that bought them*, and is not to *deny* God, to *wrong* him? Elſe we muſt ſay, that *we do not know what Hereſie wrongs God*, and that's to turn Religion into a light *Scepticiſme*, & to make it the greateſt uncertainty in the world.

Mal. 3. 8.

1 Tim. 2. 2.

2 Pet. 2. 1.

Or

Or lastly, that *no Heresie, though broached and owned, is to be observed, and taken notice of by the Magistrate, otherwise then as it hath an influence upon the disturbance of the State*; and that seems to me to be as much as if we should say, *The peace of the State ought to be more dear to a Christian Magistrate, then either the truth or the glory of God.* In a word, to punish such as I have been speaking of capitally, is unwarrantable cruelty; but not to restrain them at all seems contrary to that zeal which a *Christian Magistrate* ought to have for God and Religion. I shall end this point with a holy *meditation* of one of the *burning* and *shining lights* of this age; *In mine own wrongs I will hold patience laudable, but in Gods wrongs impious.*

Thirdly, *The impartiality of divine justice*, there is no προσωπολημψια with God; nor ought to be with you: nothing given so frequently in charge in Scripture that I know of as this, *not to respect persons.* And that in reference to God himself, *Deut.* 1. 17. *ye shall not respect persons in judgement (for the judgement is Gods): but hear the small as well as the greater.* And elsewhere, *Thou shalt not wrest judgement, thou shalt not respect persons.* And in *Leviticus*, *Thou shalt not honour the person of the mighty, nor respect the person of the poor:* neither *cowardly fear* the one, nor *foolishly pity* the other; though the *poor* be especially the Magistrates *charge*, and it ought to be his *care* to defend him and pity him, so far as may be *sine lasione justitia*, saith *Aquinas.* So in *Exodus, neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause:* that is, with violation of justice and equitie. And to name no more; *to have respect of persons is not good*, saith *Solomon.* The word προσωπολημψια (if we believe *Zanchy*) is properly *verbum forense*, a word of *Assizes, & de judicibus propriè prædicatur. Accepting persons* is a sin incident to those who are employed in matters of judicature, and transactions of Law; and is as commonly (I fear) practised, as it is little understood: when Jurours are byassed more by love or hate to the person, then by conscience of their oaths or insight into the cause: when *verdict* is the language of their affection, or præjudice, not of their knowledge and conscience: when the interest of some near relation, or a suggestion from a friend swaies them more then the equity of the cause; when witnesses swear home in one mans cause and wont in another, though they know as much of it, and the case depends on it: when a lawyer pleads the poor mans cause faintly and coldly (though perhaps the most just) the rich mans with abundance of zeal, and heat of passion; all this is a vitious and sinfull respect of persons. And suffer me (*Right honourable*) to be your remembrancer, though I confidently believe you both know these things, and abhor them: when one mans cause is expedited and dispatched upon the bare consideration of some out-

Deut. 16.19. Lev. 19. 15.

Aquin. 2. 2. Exod. 23. 3.

Prov. 28. 21.

Zanch. in Ephes. 6. 9.

ward qualification, (as Riches, Friendſhip, Kindred, Countrie or the like) and in the mean time, a poor mans caſe is deferred and protracted: when one mans caſe upon the like conſideration is ſifted into, another mans perfunctorily paſſed over: or the Jurie better informed in one mans caſe then in another: when one mans caſe is weighed in the ballance of equitie; a ſecond of prejudice; a third of favour and affection: when of two involved in the ſame guilt one meets with a milder ſentence then the other, as being a friend, or rich, or powerfull, or becauſe of ſome circumſtantial opinion, or the like: when the perſon commends the caſe, not the caſe the perſon: in a word when any conſideration beſides the equity of the cauſe, and juſtneſs of the law, prevailes with the Judge in judgement, this is an unjuſt, and ſinfull reſpect of perſons. *God ſtandeth in the congregation of the mighty, he judgeth among the Gods,* ſaith Pſal. 82.1,2. *David, how long will ye judge unjuſtly, and accept the perſons of the wicked?* 'Tis a great and crying ſin, certainly, the very ruin of ſocieties: it overturnes, and perverts the end of the Laws, (the protection of which the meaneſt may challenge as his right) which as they were made, ſo ſhould be executed, without reſpect of perſon. 'Tis a ſin, which robs the ſubject of his liberty and ſecurity, and makes him ſlaviſh and ſervile, whileſt he fears (if he cannot be aſſured of an Impartial execution of the Laws) a leſſer fault in him may feel a ſeverer hand of juſtice, then a greater in another. Riches or Honour, Diverſitie of opinions, or what ever other circumſtances of the perſon, alter not the nature of homicide, or adulterie, or theft: God is equally diſhonoured, the common-wealth equally ſuffers, the law is equally violated by theſe ſins, be the perſon what he will be; therefore reſpecting theſe muſt needs be an overthrowing of the laws, and a perverting of judgement. Beſides, this ſin diſpoſeth a man to other ſins, to all kinde of iniquity; *to have reſpect of perſon,* Prov. 18.21. ſaith *Solomon, is not good; for a piece of bread that man will tranſgreſs.* Yea, it lays him open to the curſe of the people: ſo the ſame *Wiſe-*Prov. 24.24. *man, He that ſaith to the wicked, Thou art righteous, him ſhall the people curſe, nations ſhall abhor him.* And that which is worſe and moſt aggravates the crime, Judges on their tribunals perſonate and repreſent God, and ſo by reſpecting perſons make God a partner in that ſin which he moſt hates. *Druſius in difficil. loc. in* Deut. 3. *Druſius* notes that the Ancients painted juſtice, *peplo oculis obducto, with a veil drawn over her eyes;* to ſignifie that impartialitie, which ought to be in the adminiſtrations of juſtice. Judges ſhould be ſeeing into the cauſe: (that's the Judges honour and the peoples advantage and ſecurity; as S. *Paul* Acts 26. 2. accounted it his priviledge to anſwer before *Agrippa*, becauſe he 'knew him expert in all cuſtomes and queſtions; ſo I am confident others

others will finde this their advantage from you, Right Honourable) but blinde to the perſon; knowing, but not partial.

A Judge, ſaith the Philoſopher, is δίκαιον ἔμψυχον, *living & breathing juſtice.* The Judges in *Egypt* vvere painted vvithout hands, and blinde. And the *Areopagites*, vvho vvere Judges at *Athens*, paſſed their ſentence in the night, and had their judicatures in ſome dark rooms, that ſo they might not be byaſſed by prejudice or affection to the perſon, to give vvrong judgement: and, I queſtion not, but you vvill be found ſuch in our *Athens*. And by thus imitating the juſtice of God you may hereby;

Ariſt. Polit. lib. 5. cap. 7.

I. *Promote the end of the Laws, and the end of your office*, which is the *publick ſecurity*, which is no way better conſulted then by *juſtice* and *equity*. S. *Auſtin* plainly denies, that ever the *Romane politie* could be called properly a *Common-wealth*, upon this ground, that; *ubi non eſt juſtitia, non eſt reſpublica*. he calls Common-wealths without juſtice, but *magna latrocinia*: or, in *Lipſius* his language, *congeries, confuſio, turba*: 'tis but an abuſe of the word *Reſpublica, Common-wealth*, where the publick good is not conſulted by an impartial juſtice and equity; 'tis but a *confuſed heap*, a *rowt of men*. Or, if we will call it ſo at preſent, it will not be ſo long without juſtice: for beſides that *injuſtice* and *oppreſsion* makes the multitude tumultuous, and fills the peoples heads with dangerous deſignes (*Rehoboam's* oppreſsing his ſubjects occaſioned the *revolting of ten tribes*; and it was the injuſtice of *Samuels* ſons (when Judges) which made the people ſo impetuous in deſiring a King.) Beſides this, I ſay, it lays a Nation open and obnoxious to the wrath and vengeance of God; as God threatens to *Iudah* in the Prophet: *They* (namely the Princes) *judge not the fatherleſs; neither doth the cauſe of the widow come unto them: therefore ſaith the Lord, I will eaſe me of mine adverſaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.*

Aug. de Civ. Dei lib. 10. c. 21. & lib. 4. cap. 4.
Lipſius de conſt. lib. 2. cap. 13.
1 Kings 12.
1 Sam. 8.3.
Iſa. 1.23,24.

The *Law* is the *pulſe* of the Common-wealth, you may know what temper the body Politick is in by the motions of juſtice, and executions of the Laws: this oft prevents or diverts the judgements of God upon a nation. *Phineas* executes judgement, and ſtayes the *plague*: ſo the *three years famine* ceaſeth upon *Davids* executing judgement upon *Sauls* ſons. *Juſtice* is the beſt *eſtabliſhment* of Common-wealths; *The King by judgement eſtabliſheth the land*, ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 29. 4. And it is a good ſecurity againſt the proceedings of Gods juſtice againſt a nation; *Run ye through the ſtreets of Jeruſalem*, ſaith God, Jer. 5. 1. *and ſeek in the broad places thereof, if ye can finde a man, if there be any that executeth judgement, and I will pardon it.* This is the advantage (*my Lords*) the publick will reap by your *impartial* execution of *juſtice* and *equity*. But

Num. 25. 11.
2 Sam. 21. 14.

II. *You may with the greater comfort appear another day before the tribunal of Gods impartial justice, to give account of your stewardships.* You are *set up* by God, you *judge* for him, your *authority* is from him, that speaks your power, and our obedience; even for *conscience sake*, Rom. 13.5. And let me minde you, that your account must be to him, aud that bespeaks your care and faithfulness. There is a day coming, wherein all, both *small* and *great*, must appear before the *judgement-seat* of Christ; and then with *what judgement you* here *judge others, your selves must be judged*, and *with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again.* Then with what horrour and amazement shall an unjust cruel *Felix* appear a prisoner at the bar, to receive the final sentence of that *judgement*, at a *discourse* of which he *trembled* here, though a Judge upon the bench? How fearfull a thing will it be for such a Judge as our Saviour speaks of, *who neither fears God, nor regards man*, at that day to fall into the hands of the *living God*, the *impartial just* Judge of *all* the world? How shall *Pilate* tremble to see Christ *then* Judge, whom here he *judged* and *condemned*? Then shall you, (*my Lords*) having here faithfully improved that *talent* of *power* and *authority* God hath intrusted you with, receive the *Euge* of those good servants, *Well done good and faithfull servants, you have been faithfull over a few things, I will make you rulers over many things, enter you into the joy of your Lord.* I shall end all with that famous *Jehoshaphats* charge to the *Judges*, *Take heed what ye do, for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord; wherefore let the fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it, for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.* Take heed, for God is with you *in the judgement:* he is *with you*, to *see* and *take notice* of you, that calls for your *faithfulness:* he is *with you* to *protect* you; that speaks your support and encouragement: And I shall pray, that he would be with you to *counsel* and *direct* you, and that will promote your *comfort*, and the Nations *happiness*.

Matth. 7.2.

Acts 24.25.

Luke 18.2.

Matth. 25.21

2 Chron. 19.6.

FINIS.

DEI PECULIUM,

OR,

GODS PECULIAR PEOPLE.

In a Sermon preached at S. *Gregorie's* by S. *Paul's*, at the Lecture there, *Auguſt* 19. 1656.

By JOHN FROST, *B. D.* and late Fellow of S. *JOHNS* Colledge in *Cambridge*, and Miniſter of *Olaves-Hart-ſtreet* in *London.*

ACT. 20. 28.

Ut paſcatis Eccleſiam Dei, quam acquiſivit ſanguine ſuo.

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ΛΑΟΝ ΠΕΡΙΟΥΣΙΟΝ,

A peculiar people.

Περιούσιος, a word invented by the *Greek* interpreters, if you credit *Stephanus*, upon their authoritie uſed by the *Greek* Fathers, and in this place *onely* by the Apoſtle adopted into Scripture: it is of near alliance to that other word ἐπιούσιον, which our Saviour uſeth, *Matth.* 6. 11. which *Hierom* underſtands of *that bread which came from heaven*, Chriſt himſelf, ſpoken of, *John* 6. 51. the peculiar *nouriſhment* of Saints, fed on by faith. But I ſhall not trouble you or my ſelf with any nice *Criticiſmes* as to the *word*; but ſhall engage into what is of *ſubſtantial* and *fundamental* concernment. And ſo in the whole verſe ſix things are conſiderable.

Firſt, *A redemption aſſerted*, as made by Jeſus Chriſt; ἵνα λυτρώσηται, *that he might redeem*; the word ſignifies a *redemption* by way of *price* and *purchaſe*.

Secondly, *The means of this redemption*, or *the price paid in order to it*; ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν, *who gave himſelf*; the price was not ſilver and gold, but τίμιον αἷμα, *precious bloud*, 1 Pet. 1. 18. *Juſtice* in God could require no more, *Love* in Chriſt would ſuffer him to give no leſs.

Thirdly, *What this redemption is from*: ἀπὸ πάσης ἀνομίας, *from all iniquitie*; both as to *guilt* and *power*. Whence the Apoſtle *Peter* makes the *terminus à quo* of this *redemption*, our *former vain converſation*, ἐκ τῆς ματαίας ἀναστροφῆς. For Chriſt to have *redeemed* men from the *guilt* of puniſhment, and not from the *power* and *practiſe* of ſin, would be no leſs then for Chriſt himſelf to have come into the world to have been a cloak and patronage for impietie.

Fourthly, *That to which we are redeemed by Chriſt*: that is, to *holineſs* and *puritie*. Καθαρίσῃ. Chriſt *purchaſed* not onely *pardon*, but *grace* and *holineſs* for his people: *that we being delivered, might ſerve him in holineſs and righteouſneſs all the daies of our lives.* Luke 1. 74, 75.

Fifthly, *The object of this redemption*, λαὸν περιούσιον, *a peculiar people*:

ple: ſuch as Chriſt's purchaſe gave him a *peculiar right* to; therefore 'tis added here, ἑαυτῷ, *unto himſelf.*

Sixthly, *A deſcription of the perſons redeemed*, à poſteriori, *of this peculiar people by an inſeparable effect or adjunct*: Ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων, *Zealous of good works*; not *cold* and *perfunctorie*, but *fervent* and *zealous* in practical holineſs.

Each of theſe will fill up an hours diſcourſe; I have ſingled out the fifth as my preſent ſubject; to wit, *the perſons redeemed*, whom the Apoſtle here calleth λαὸν περιούσιον, *a peculiar people*, whence the *obſervation* is obvious and plain, that

Doctrine. *God and Chriſt have a peculiar people in the world.*

In the proſecution of which, I will ſhew you,

Firſt, *In what reſpects a people may be ſaid to be God's peculiar.*

Secondly, *What this peculiar people is.*

Thirdly, *How it appears that God hath ſuch a peculiar people in the world.*

Fourthly, *Improve all by ſome application.* For the firſt, God hath a *peculiar people* in three reſpects.

I. In reſpect of *outward diſpenſation*, and *diſtinguiſhing adminiſtrations.* Thus the Jews of old were *Gods peculiar*: his סְגֻלָּה whom he calls his *peculiar treaſure.* God cauſed his Word and Ordinances to be diſpenſed amongſt them, which the reſt of the world were ſtrangers to; he entruſted them with his divine oracles, which the Apoſtle notes as their *diſtinguiſhing priviledge* from the Gentiles; and the *Pſalmiſt* as their *peculiar prerogative.* The reſt of the world were like the dry barren Wilderneſs, they God's Encloſure, his Vineyard, who had plentifull ſhowres of the dew of heaven falling upon them: and ſo they ſhall be part of Gods peculiar again: the Scripture gives us evident ground to believe their *converſion to the faith*, eſpecially, *Rom.* 11. from verſe 23. to verſe 28. I think we are much in the dark as to the time of their reſtitution: I verily believe the Idolatrie of *Rome* (which is the Jews greateſt *ſtumbling-block*) muſt firſt be removed, Religion reformed. This may be a digreſſion (however it is but a ſhort one) as to the Text, but not to the Intendment of the *Lecture.* And in this reſpect likewiſe the Chriſtian part of the world is *God's peculiar*, as diſtinguiſhed from Pagans, and Mahometans, and the reſt: in the Chriſtian part of the world, *England* is God's peculiar: in *England*, let me ſay, *London* is God's peculiar; a place like *Capernaum*, *exalted up to heaven* in the uſe and enjoyment of Ordinances; I heartily pray it never have *Capernaum's* doom, to be *thrown down to hell* for the contempt and abuſe of them.

Exod. 19. 5.

Rom. 3. 1, 2. Pſal. 147. 19, 20.

II. In reſpect of *ſpecial office* and *employment*. Thus Magiſtrates are

are God's peculiar, (he hath honoured them with his *own* name in Scripture, *Pſal.* 82.6.) peculiarly repreſenting his Dominion; his Deputies and Vicegerents on earth; they *rule by him, Prov.* 8.15. and ſhould for him; they are his Miniſters, θεοῦ διάκονοι, as the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 13.4. Thus alſo the Miniſters are God's peculiar, in reſpect of *Function*: as the tribe of *Levi* was under the Law; as being a ſpecial right of Ordination ſet apart for ſpecial ſervices. *Separate me Barnabas and Saul*, ſaith the holy Ghoſt, *for the work whereunto I have called them*, Acts 13.2. which you may ſee was done accordingly, *verſe* 3. by *faſting and prayer*, and *laying on of hands*. The Miniſterial office lies not in *common* to all: but there muſt be ſuch a *calling*, and *laſting function* as *diſtinct* from the people. You may finde them diſtinguiſhed expreſly, *Revel.* 2.24. ὑμῖν καὶ λοιποῖς, *unto you, and unto the reſt*: whence the Miniſtry in antiquitie is called κλῆρος, *a portion*, ſet *a part* and *dedicated* to God's *peculiar* ſervice, and acts of *worſhip* and *diſcipline*; which no other can perform as acts of office. The Magiſtrates dutie is to uphold, but not to exerciſe theſe peculiar acts; which when *Theodoſius* the Emperor would have been intermeddling with, he received this repulſe by S. *Ambroſe*: ἀλλ' οὐ βασιλέας ἐν ἱερεῦσι ποιεῖ, that, *his ſcarlet made him a Magiſtrate, not a Miniſter.*

III. In reſpect of *ſpecial grace and favour*: though God bear an *univerſal philanthropie* to all men as his *creatures*; yet he loves ſome with ſpecial love and diſtinguiſhing favour: which *David* prayed to God he might have the experience of, *Remember me, O Lord, with the favour thou beareſt unto thy people.* Thus God hath a peculiar people in two reſpects. Pſal. 106.4.

1. In reſpect of *choiſe* and *purpoſe*; ſo many, who at preſent lie in *common* with the reſt of the world, not yet effectually brought home by the power of God's Word and Spirit, (I mean *elected* though *unconverted* perſons) are God's peculiar. Many of God's jewels lie a long time in the mire and ſink of the world. S. *Paul* was a *choſen veſſel*, though at preſent *breathing out blaſphemies and threatnings*. Theſe (me thinks) are like a piece of *gold* not yet refined, but deſigned by the goldſmith for ſome ſpecial uſe. Theſe our Saviour ſpeaks of, *John* 10.16. *And other ſheep I have, which are not of this fold*, &c. Whether you underſtand there the *Gentiles* not *yet called home* by the Goſpel, or *all unbelievers* amongſt *Jews* and *Gentiles*, who, in reſpect of purpoſe, belonged to the ſheepfold of Chriſt: ſufficient it is to my purpoſe, that Chriſt calls ſome, though in a preſent ſtate of unbelief, his ſheep; to wit, in reſpect of God's ſecret purpoſe; *ad arcanam patris electionem hoc refert*, ſaith *Calvin*. So in a remote *potentialitie*, which, by vertue Acts 9.15. Verſe 1. Calv. in loc.

of the purpose of God, and stipulation of Christ, is certainly to be reduced into act, they may be called Christ's sheep, his peculiar which God loves with a love of *benevolence*, not *complacencie*; for so to love any *unholy* person is a *contradiction* to his puritie and nature; the love of election is *amor ordinativus*, not *collativus*, a *love preparing* mercies for us, not bestowing them: *præparatio beneficiorum*, as *Augustine* calls *election*, which being an *immanent act* makes no *change* in the creature, but *distinguisheth* persons onely as to a secret purpose in God.

2. In respect of *actual claim and interest*. And thus Saints believers who are effectually brought home, and gathered by the Word, accompanied with the Spirit, out of the world (and this is the fruit of the former) are his peculiar: as our Saviour said to his disciples, *John* 5.19. *I have chosen you out of the world*. And these I conceive are meant here, the Apostle speaking of such as are a *purified people*, and *zealous of good works*, the characters of Saints.

Rom.8.30.

And this for the first.

Secondly, *What this peculiar people is*: of which briefly, because I intend the third particular. The Original gives me ground of a sixfold description of them by six qualifications.

I. An *excellent people*. So the Original in the Text imports, περιούσιος, *à* περιῆναι, *quod est præstare*, as *Grotius notes*, coming from a Greek word, which signifies *to excel*. So *David* esteemed of the Saints, (however the world accounts them but περίψημα, *off-scouring*; and no wonder, for wicked men esteem Christ himself to have no *form* or *comelinesse*, &c.) as an *excellent generation*. *Excellent* in respect of that *image of God* they bear, and those relations they stand in to him. *Solomon* passeth the same judgement upon the Saints, *Prov.* 12.26. *The righteous*, saith he, *is more excellent then his neighbour*. Religion and Holiness puts a splendour upon persons, such as even dazzles the eyes sometimes of wicked men, and begets in them, though no true love, yet an aw and reverence, as is evident in *Herod*, who feared *John Baptist*, Mark 6. 20. knowing he was a *just man*, and *an holy*.

1 Cor 4.13.

Isa.53.2.
Psal.16.3.

II. *A separated people*. *Symmachus* explains this word by ἐξαίρετον, that is, *è numero electum, one that is chosen and taken out of the number of others*. So the Lord hath a peculiar people, whom he hath *separated unto himself*, both in respect of Election, God, looking upon the corrupted Mass of mankind by a free act of his Soveraign will, pitched his thoughts upon those, leaving these; the first an act of the highest mercie, the other no act of injustice, because God

was

was under no obligation by grace to repair what man by ſin wilfully loſt and forfeited. *Deus de ſuo bonus, de noſtro juſtus*, ſaith *Tertullian. Separated* again by *diſcriminating grace* in *effectual vocation*: *The Lord hath ſet apart him that is righteous for himſelf*, Pſal. 3. And they ſhall be ſeparated hereafter at the *day of judgement*; that's the day in which he *makes up his jewels*, and ſeparates the *ſheep* from the *goats*, the *wheat* from the *chaff*, determining that to the *fire*, gathering this to his *garner*. Mat. 3. 12.

III. *A hidden people.* So περιούσιος ſignifies, *quaſi inſtar peculii reconditum*: *hidden* to the eye of the world in their life: for their *life is hid with Chriſt in God*, Col. 3. 3. *hidden* in reſpect of their *comforts*, *A ſtranger doth not intermeddle with their joy*, Prov. 14. 10. It is the *hidden manna*, Rev. 2. 17.

IV. *They are a precious people. Quaſi chariſſimas & pretioſiſſimas opes*, ſaith *Beza. Precious* in reſpect of the price laid down to purchaſe them; *the redemption of their ſoul is precious*, Pſal. 49. 8. *Precious* in reſpect of their graces; *precious faith* you read of 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. *Precious* in reſpect of that eſteem God hath of them; they are his *jewels*, Malach. 3. 17. *Precious* in the *eyes of God*, Iſaiah 43. 4. *Precious* to God in their *lives*, and *precious* alſo in their *deaths*, *Pſal.* 116. 15.

V. *A rare people. Quod rarum eſt, & inuſitatum*, that's περίσιον, ſaith *Budæus*. Thus the true Saints are but a rare people in reſpect of the wicked of the world. Chriſts flock is but a *little flock*, Luke 12. 32. Even amongſt thoſe who are *called* the *elect* are but few, Mat. 20. 16.

VI. *A beloved people*: ſo *Pagnin* tranſlates סגלה *Exod*, 19. 5. *Theſaurum dilectum*, *a beloved treaſure*: ſo Saints are called, *the beloved of God*, in the epiſtle to the *Romanes*, Rom. 1. 7. whom he loves with a ſpecial diſtinguiſhing love through Chriſt. God makes demonſtration of univerſal love to all his *creatures*, Mat. 5. 44, 45. in the exerciſe of his general providences, upholding and ordering all things as his creatures; ſo his *tender mercies are over all his works*, Pſal. 145. 9. But the love which he bears to his *peculiar* is a *peculiar* love; that the love of a Creatour, this of a Father; that founded in his nature, the other in Chriſt.

Thirdly, The third particular, *How it appears that God hath ſuch a peculiar people in the world.*

This *peculiarity* appears,

I. In the *diſtinguiſhing love* of the Father.

II. The *ſpecial undertakings* of the Son.

III. The *peculiar workings* of the Spirit.

The firſt of theſe is diſcovered ſeven ways.

1. In God's *ſpecial purpoſe* and *election*. Univerſal election is a contradiction in *adjecto*: thus God had a peculiar from eternity: *he hath choſen us*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Eph.* 1. 4. *before the foundations of the world*: and this not upon a *previſion* of any moving impulſive conditions in the creature (for whatſoever good is in the creature, *faith, holineſs, perſeverance*, are all the fruits of this *electing love*, Acts 13.48. Some goodneſs in the object muſt provoke our choiſe, otherwiſe it is irrational; but God (who is Soveraign and abſolute) chooſeth perſons to *make them good*, Epheſ.1.4.) but by his own *free* and *gracious purpoſe* and *will*. *Predeſtinated*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *according to the purpoſe of him, who worketh all things after the counſel of his own will*, Epheſ.1.11. and, *according to the good pleaſure of his will*, verſe 5. That *conditional purpoſe* pleaded for by ſo many muſt neceſſarily ſuppoſe a fallibility in God's knowledge, which can have no foundation in reſpect of things future, beſides the free determinations of God's infallible will. And, ſuppoſing God's foreknowledge of things, which the Patrons of conditional purpoſes, muſt, and do confeſs (unleſs they will *Socinianize*): I do not ſee (and, I confeſs, after my utmoſt ſearch, here I ſtick) how they can avoid that neceſſitie of *futuritions*, which they condemn in others: for God's knowledge is as undeceivable, as his will is infallible: a miſtake or errour in the one is as inconſiſtent with divine perfection, as fruſtration in the other. The *Socinians* indeed eaſily cut the knot, by denying the foreknowledge of God, and making his knowledge co-exiſtent with the objects known; which is a piece of mad Atheiſme, if you credit *Auguſtin*, *confiteri eſſe Deum, & negare præſcium futurorum apertiſſima eſt inſania*: (*known to God are all his works from the beginning of the world*, Acts 15. 18.) but to confeſs God's foreſight, and leave all events determinable by the arbitrary indifferencie of mans free-will, is ſuch a piece of inconſiſtencie, as, I muſt profeſs, I underſtand not how it is reconcileable to reaſon. God hath a peculiar people in reſpect of his own fore-knowledge; *God hath not caſt away his people which he foreknew*, Rom. 11. 2. contradiſtinguiſhed to the οἱ λοιποὶ (*The election hath obtained, and the reſt were blinded*, verſe 7.) Our Saviour more then once mentions, *John* 17.6. a *peculiar people* given to him by his *Father*, which are peculiariz'd and contradiſtinguiſhed from *the world*, verſe 9. The fulleſt Scripture to prove this peculiaritie, is *Rom.* 9.11,12,13. *For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpoſe of God according to election might ſtand, not of works, but of him that calleth: it was ſaid unto her, the elder ſhall ſerve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Eſau have I hated.*

Aug. l. 5. de civ. Dei. c. 9.

2. In

2. In reſpect of *diſcriminating grace in effectual vocation*: and this in purſuit of and equal latitude with the former *peculiarity* of *election*, *Rom.*8.30. Theſe are κλητοὶ κατὰ πρόθεσιν, verſ.28. *called according to his purpoſe. That this* GRACE *is given to all*, is an aſſertion ſo contradictory to the whole *current* of Scripture, that, I profeſs, I have oft wondred, that it ſhould have any *abettours* amongſt wiſe and conſiderate men. Had the Gentiles this? whom God *ſuffered to walk in their own ways*, Acts 14. 16. and who *want the Goſpel*, and the *preaching of Chriſt*, and ſo conſequently are without a *poſſibility of believing* in an *ordinary* way; for *Rom.* 10. 14. *How ſhall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard?* Have all within the ſound of the Goſpel this? No ſurely: for Chriſt ſaith, Matth.11.25. *I thank thee, O Father, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them to babes.* God gives grace *ſufficient* to all men, to *leave them without excuſe*, and *vindicate his judicial proceedings* againſt them from all charge of *injuſtice*: but that God gives all ſufficient grace to elicite ſupernatural acts of faith, and other graces in order to eternal ſalvation. I cannot believe, ſo long as that diſcriminating Text is upon record in the word, Matth.13.11. *To you it is given to know the myſteries of the kingdome of heaven, but to them it is not given.* And while Scripture *peculiarizeth* this grace, and determines it to the ſame latitude with *divine purpoſe* and *election*; *God hath called us*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 Tim.1. 9. κατ' ἰδίαν πρόθεσιν, *according to his own purpoſe*: therefore there can be no *univerſal grace* without *univerſal election*; becauſe the *actual* beſtowing of *converting grace* is the iſſue of *election*, Eph. 1. 3. καθὼς ἐξελέξατο, *Who hath bleſſed us with ſpiritual bleſſings, according as he hath choſen us before the foundations of the world.*

3. In reſpect of a *peculiar providence of God*; whereby he takes care of and watcheth over his *peculiar people*: God exerciſeth an *univerſal providence* over the *world*, *Pſal.* 36. 6. *he preſerveth man and beaſt*; but he hath a *ſpecial* care of his own people; and thus, I conceive, you muſt underſtand that text 1 *Cor.* 9. 9. *Doth God take care for oxen?* that is, not *comparatively* to the care he hath of his people. When judgements are upon the reſt of the world God hath then a *ſpecial* care of his Peculiar, God calls his people his *hidden ones*, *Pſal.* 83. 3. that look as you hide your *jewels* in time of *plunder*; ſo God hides his *peculiar* by his providence in times of *danger*. Thus he hides *Noah* in the *Ark*, when a *deluge* overwhelmed the world; and ſecures *Lot*, when *fire from heaven* deſtroyed *Sodom*. *David* was confident of this *ſpecial providence* of God; *In the time of trouble*, ſaith he, *he ſhall hide me in his pavilion, in the ſecret of his tabernacle* Pſal. 27. 5.

tabernacle ſhall he hide me; he ſhall ſet me upon a rock: and ſo elſe-
Pſal.31.20. where he ſaith, *Thou ſhalt hide them in the ſecret of thy preſence from*
Pſal.143.9. *the pride of man*: and, *Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies I flie unto thee to hide me.* God hides good *Joſiah*, lays him up under
2 Kings 22. 30. ground (as many doe their *plate* and *jewels* in time of *war*) ſafe *from the evil to come.* He hides *Jonah* in the *Whales belly* from the *rage* and *fury* of the *waters.* Obſerve *Deut.* 32. 9, 10. *For the Lords portion is his people, he found him in a deſert land, in the waſt howling wilderneſs: he led him about, he inſtructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.*

4. In reſpect of *peculiar audience* and *acceptance.* They have, as the *hand* of God to *protect* them, and the *heart* of God to *love* them, ſo the *eares* of God to *hear* them. *The eyes of the Lord are upon the*
Pſal.34.15. *righteous, and his ears are open to their cry*, ſaith *David.* As God hath an *open hand* to *relieve* them, ſo an *open ear* to *hear* them: whereas
Prov.15.8. the wicked of the world finde God turning a *deaf ear* to their prayers; they are but *abhominations* unto him: *If I regard iniquity*, ſaith *David*, Pſal.66. 18. *the Lord will not hear me. Quantum à præceptis, tantum ab auribus Dei longè ſumus*, ſaith *Tertullian.* If you aske the *Engliſh* of it *Solomon* gives it, *Prov.* 28. 9. *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer ſhall be abhomination.* But now, *memoria præceptorum viam orationibus ſternit in cælum*, as the ſame Father goes on. *Obedience* procures us *audience* in *the court of heaven*, as the *Allegiance* of a *ſubject* doth in *princes* courts upon *earth. The prayer of the upright is Gods delight*, Prov. 15. 8. Theſe are Gods *peculiar favourites*, therefore their *petitions* are heard, they have a *friend* and *Advocate* at Court to put them up and preſent
Matth.21.22. them, and a promiſe of *audience, whatſoever ye ſhall ask in prayer believing, ye ſhall receive.* If at any time they miſcarrie, it is by reaſon of the unbecomingneſs of their petitions, either they ask what is
Jam.4.3. not *honourable* for God to *give*, or *ſafe* for them to *receive*; at leaſt not at preſent: or they ask *amiſs*, as to the manner.

5. In regard of a *peculiar covenant*, which God hath made with them: I mean *the covenant of grace.* Indeed, all profeſſing Chriſtianity are, I conceive, within the *covenant*, in reſpect of *outward adminiſtrations* and *priviledges*; but the benefits of the covenant, *remiſsion, juſtification, adoption*, and the reſt, belong onely to the
Ezek.16.8. elect-regenerate, Gods *peculiar.* The *conditional covenant* is in the diſpenſation of the Goſpel offered to all, and the *grace* of the covenant upon the *condition*; but there are a *peculiar people* in behalf of whom God hath undertaken for the working of the condition in them, as well as beſtowing the benefit upon them, *Jer.* 31.33. *But this ſhall be the covenant that I will make with the houſe of Iſrael after*

thoſe

thoſe days, ſaith the Lord: I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, & they ſh all be my people. Thus, I think, it may be ſafely expreſſed, *The covenant of grace is tendred to all, the grace of the covenant given but to ſome. Gather my SAINTS together to me, thoſe that have made a covenant with me by ſacrifice,* Pſal. 50. 5. *Sacrifices* were for confirmation of *covenants.*

6. In reſpect of *peculiar chaſtiſements* and *corrections.* Daily obſervation tells us, that God afflicts *good* and *bad,* but with a vaſt difference; he afflicts his own people in a *ſpecial peculiarity*; *theſe,* as a *father his children*; *wicked men*, as a *Judge* doth a *malefactour.* Therefore, notwithſtanding what ſome of late have written to the contrary, I cannot ſubmit to call the *afflictions* of Gods people properly *puniſhments,* becauſe they iſſue not from *pure juſtice,* which was ſatisfied by Chriſt ſo far as *vindicative,* on the behalf of believers: by which though afflictions and death it ſelf were not wholly removed, yet changed into chaſtiſements and trialls. The afflictions of the godly are ſometimes the iſſue of the anger of a provoked father, and that mixed with love: for, *whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth:* but not the effects of his wrath as an *incenſed Judge.* They differ as much as a Lord's cudgelling his ſlave, or a Princes gibbetting a rebel, and a fathers whipping his childe. As *Moſes* his rod, out of his hand a ſerpent, in his hand a rod. To a wicked man afflictions are a *cup of trembling, fore-taſts of the vials of wrath*: to a godly man but a *cup* in the hand of a *father* (and though there may be ſome *drops* of the anger of a father in it, yet with an *allay* and *mixture* of *mercy* and *love*) or a *potion* from the hand of our *Phyſitian* who intends our health. *Auguſtine* differenceth them, as a *butchers* cutting the fleſh, and the *chirurgions* doing it. God eſtabliſhed it as his method of dealing with *Solomon*; and ſo with all his people. And theſe châſtiſements are the *badge* and *cognizance* of theſe *peculiar* ones.

Hebr. 12. 6.

John 18. 11.

2 Sam. 7. 14.

Hebr. 12. 7, 8.

7. In reſpect of that *peculiar glory* God hath deſigned them to, which is the portion onely of his *Benjamins.* *God,* ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 9. *hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain ſalvation by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. It is your Fathers good pleaſure,* ſaith Chriſt, *Luke* 12. 32. *to give you the kingdome:* which Scripture calls ἡτοιμασμένην ὑμῖν βασιλείαν, *a kingdome prepared for them from the foundation of the world: laid out* for them by Gods *electing* love; *purchaſed* and *prepared* for them by Chriſt; they *fitted* and *prepared* for it by the *ſanctification* of the Spirit; and at laſt put into *poſſeſſion* of it by Chriſt himſelf. This is the peculiar portion of thoſe, who by God were *given* to Chriſt, who will ſee to ſecure it to them: and

Matth. 25. 34

Joh. 14. 21. Coloſſ. 1. 12. Matth. 25. 34

Joh. 17. 24.

this glory is peculiarly laid out for ſome; and, if you would know to whom, S. *John* tells you, *Rev.* 21.27. *to ſuch as are written in the Lambs book of life.*

II. This *peculiarity* appears in the *undertakings* of Chriſt: and here is a four-fold peculiarity.

1. In reſpect of a *peculiar covenant* and *ſtipulation* with his Father, for the bringing home ſuch a *peculiar people*, given into his hands as Mediatour; *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God*, Hebr. 10. 7. God gave ſuch a *peculiar* into the hands of Chriſt, declaring his determinate will for their ſalvation: and to do this *will* of his Father, Chriſt came to the *earth*, and ſubmitted to all the *conditions* agreed upon, in order to their recovery; *All that the Father giveth me*, ſaith he, *ſhall come unto me.* And this it it, which Divines call the *Covenant* between the *Father* and the *Son*, as diſtinct from the *covenant of grace* made between *God* and *man.*

John 6. 39. Verſ. 37.

2. In reſpect of a *peculiar purchaſe*, Gal. 4. 4, 5. *To redeem them that were under the law:* Ἐξαγοράσῃ; it ſignifies *a purchaſe by price.* Pray, obſerve that in 1 *Pet.* 2.9. *But ye are a choſen generation, a peculiar people,* λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν: *a purchaſed people*, it is in the margins of your Bibles: *populus acquiſitionis*, in the *Vulgar. He lays down his life for his ſheep:* unbelievers are none of thoſe ſheep. It was his *Church* onely, *which he purchaſed with his own bloud*, Acts 20. 28. Chriſt *loved his Church and gave himſelf for it*, Eph. 5. 25, 26, 27. It is *his people* onely which he *ſaveth from their ſins*, Matth. 1. 21. And where Chriſt is ſaid to die for *all men*, and for *the world*, you are to interpret it of *all ſorts* and *conditions* of men, of *every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation*; of the *Gentiles* as well as of the *Jews*, in compariſon of whom it is evident the *Gentiles* were called *the world*, as *Rom.* 2.15. And as to that middle reconciling opinion, ſo much contended for at this time, that, *Chriſt died intentionally for all upon the condition of believing, and yet with a ſpecial intention, according to the determinate purpoſe of his Father, of actual beſtowing faith and ſalvation upon certain perſons*; it is, I profeſs to you, to me (pardon my weakneſs) a moſt unintelligible thing, (Will any wiſe man pay a *ranſome* for a *captive*, and at the ſame time intend that the *captive* ſhall have no benefit by it? It makes Chriſts death to be *in vain* to the greateſt part of the world; whereas Scripture tells us, that not *one* ſoul ſhall miſcarry, *John* 10. 15. and ſhall any of thoſe ſheep *finally* miſcarry, compared with verſ. 28.) unleſs it be aſſerted that the *condition* of faith be in every mans power, either by his *natural abilities*, which is down-right *Pelagianiſme*; or elſe by ſome *ſupernatural grace* given to all, which is *ſemipelagianiſme*, and both which the patrons of this opinion diſ-own. For Chriſt to die

John 10.15. Verſ. 26. Rev. 5. 9. *N.B.*

die to eſtabliſh a *covenant* with all men, upon an *impoſsible condition*, is as much illuſory, as if he had not died for them at all: for an *hypothetical promiſe* upon an *impoſsible condition* is equivalent to a *pure negation*, as any know who are the leaſt acquainted with the principles of *Logick* and *Reaſon*. And therefore (till *I* can ſee further light to the contrary) *I* muſt think it moſt rational to proportionate the *means* to the *end*, and ſo extend the death and purchaſe of Chriſt, to no greater latitude then to the purpoſe of God, for the carrying on of which it was deſigned; unleſs it be underſtood onely of *ſufficiencie of price*. *B.*

3. In reſpect of a *peculiar interceſsion*. Chriſts interceding at his Fathers *right hand* is diſcriminate, *Joh.* 17. 9. *I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou haſt given me, for they are thine*. And this I humbly conceive to be a good argument *à majori* to prove the *peculiarity* of Chriſts *purchaſe*: for undoubtedly Chriſt would not have grudged the expence of a *prayer* on the behalf of thoſe, for whom he ſhed his *bloud*; for, certainly, Chriſts *interceſsion* is in purſuit of his *purchaſe*; the effect of which is the *actual beſtowing* of what he here bought for them by his bloud, viz. *faith, perſeverance*, which are the fruits of Chriſts prayer, as appears by his ſpeech to Peter, *Luk.* 22. 32. Now this *interceſsion* is determinate to a *peculiar* people even to the *elect*, (and yet is of equal latitude with his death) *who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? it is Chriſt that died,* (ſaith the Apoſtle, Rom. 8. 33, 34.) *who alſo makes interceſsion for us*. And unqueſtionably had Chriſt given himſelf and now interceded for all, all ſhould be made partakers of ſpiritual ſaving bleſſings; for as the Apoſtle ſaith Rom. 8. 32. *he that ſpared not his own ſon, but delivered him up for us; how ſhall he not with him freely give us all things?* and John 11. 42. *Father, I thank thee, that thou haſt heard me, and I knew that thou heareſt me always*, *Non dubito* (ſaith *Vaſquez*) *Chriſtum peculiari oratione & voluntate merita ſua illis applicaſſe qui prædeſtinati & electi fuerunt*: conſonant to this is *Ioh.* 17. 24. *I will that they may behold my glory which thou haſt given me*, &c. *they* determinately, not *others*. *In 1. qu. 23. art. 5. p. 94. c. 3.*

4. In reſpect of *peculiar communications from Chriſt*, which proceed from that *ſpecial relation* which they have unto, and *peculiar union* with Chriſt, as *members* to the head: for though there be a laying out of grace for ſome in divine purpoſes, yet there is no effectual partaking of it, till actual believing: for *communion* is founded in *union*, the *bond* of which is *faith*, Eph. 3. 17. by means of this *union* a Chriſtian partakes of *grace*, of *ſenſe, motion, growth, life*, from Chriſt, as the head onely communicates to the united members, Chriſt is the Saviour onely of his *body*, Eph. 5. 23.

III. This *peculiarity* appears in the *peculiar workings* of the *ſpirit*, and here is a four-fold peculiarity.

1. In reſpect of *peculiar illumination*. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the ſhortneſs of *natural light*, as to *ſaving* diſcoveries, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9, 14. yet addes ver. 10. *but God hath revealed them to us by his ſpirit*, &c. ſo in that moſt excellent Scripture, 2 *Cor.* 4. having ſaid ver. 3, 4. that *the Goſpel is hid to thoſe that are loſt*, he addes ver. 6. an intimation of a *ſpecial illumination* indulged to Saints: *For* (however he dealt with others) *God, who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*. *David* makes this an argument in begging *illumination* of God, *I am thy ſervant*, ſaith he, *Pſal.* 119. 125.) *give me underſtanding*. A wicked man may have much *common* illumination, but ſuch as vaſtly differs from the illumination of the *Saints*: thoſe *puff* them up with *pride*, theſe *humble* them; though I confeſs, this *leaven* is apt to infect the beſt, as *Paul* 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. Notwithſtanding thoſe, the ſoul ſtands at a *diſtance* and *enmitie* Heb. 6. 4. from Chriſt, nay oft *apoſtatizeth* from the profeſſion of him: but theſe bring the ſoul effectually to *cloſe* with Chriſt; *Every man* (ſaith Chriſt, *Ioh.* 6. 45.) *that hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me*. That's a *head-floating* illumination, this an *heart-affecting* illumination: that, like the light of a *glow-worm*, which hath no heat in it, this like the light of the *ſun* warmeth and quickneth where it comes: it is called the *light of life* Joh. 8. 12. it provokes Saints to *love* God and to *truſt* in God, *Pſal.* 9. 10. *they which know thy name will put their truſt in thee*. *Common* illumination in a wicked man is like the ſun ſhining upon a *dung-hill*, calls out its ſtench and corruption, whereas this illumination is a *heart-changing* and a *life-reforming* knowledge. See *Epheſ.* 4. 20, 21, 22.

2. In reſpect of a *peculiar ſanctification* ſo in the text, ἵνα καθαρίσῃ ἑαυτῷ λαὸν περιούσιον; *that he might purifie unto himſelf a peculiar people*: ſo *Tit.* 3. 5. *He ſaved us by the waſhing of regeneration and renewing of the holy Ghoſt*. Sometimes Gods *peculiar* lie *wallowing* in the *mire* Ezek. 36. 25. of ſin a long time with the reſt of the world, in the groſſeſt pollutions, till God by his grace and ſpirit *ſanctifies* them to himſelf as a *peculiar*. Therefore God promiſeth in the Prophet his ſpirit, as *clean water* to *ſanctifie* the people, *I* am ſure ſo it was with the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* 6. 10, 11. *And ſuch were ſome of you*: but how come they to be otherwiſe? why, *ye are waſhed, ye are ſanctified by the ſpirit of our God*. Chriſt is made *Sanctification* as well as *Righteouſneſs* 1 Cor. 1. 30. to his people: *Righteouſneſs* by imputation, *Sanctification* by powerfull and gracious energie, and operation.

3. *In* reſpect of peculiar *ſealing*. *Seals* note *propriety*; we ſeal what is

is our own. God ſets the *ſeal* of his ſpirit upon *believers*, to note that *proprietie* he hath in them; it is *peculiar* to ſuch, *Eph.* 1. 13. *in whom alſo after you believed, you were ſealed with that holy ſpirit of promiſe.* So 2 *Cor.* 1. 21, 22. *who hath ſealed us, and given the earneſt of the ſpirit in our hearts.* It notes that *eſteem* God hath of his people, (we do not uſe to ſeal up *trifles* but *jewels* which we moſt value) and his *ſpecial love* to his choſen ones: Chriſt ſet his *ſpouſe* as a *ſeal upon his heart*, the ſeat of love: thus you finde out of every *tribe* a peculiar number ſealed to God, *Rev.* 7. 5. God ſeals none with his *ſpirit*, but whom he hath ſealed with the *privie ſeal* of *election*; of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. *The foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this ſeal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.* Cant. 8. 6.

4. In reſpect of *ſpecial and peculiar communions with God*, Eph. 2. 18. *For through him we both have an acceſs by one ſpirit to the father: through Chriſt*, as Mediatour meriting our acceſs to God, *by the ſpirit* directing and aſſiſting us in our addreſſes to him: 1 *John* 1. 3. *Our fellowſhip is with the Father and the Son*; a thing which wicked men are wholly ſtrangers to; men in a natural condition are deſcribed to be *without Chriſt* and *God*; that is, can have no *communion* with him, for, as the Apoſtle ſaith, 2 *Cor.* 6. 15, 16. *What concord hath Chriſt with Belial? what communion hath light with darkneſs? fellowſhip* with *ſin*, and *communion* with *Chriſt* are inconſiſtent: all communion with God is grounded in a *covenant-intereſt*: by the *fall* man loſt all communion with God, and cannot be reſtored to it but through a Mediatour, in whom we have intereſt upon the account onely of the *covenant of grace*: but wicked men are *ſtrangers to the covenant*, Epheſ. 2. 12. *communion* flowes from *union*, now the ſpirit being the bond of union muſt alſo be the means of Communion, (and this is the Saints Peculiar, whoſe communion with God here, is mediate in Ordinances, in which a wicked man enjoys nothing of Gods, which is the Saints priviledge here, as immediate Communion is their happineſs and glory hereafter, *ſed quorſum hæc*, may ſome ſay? This I ſhall endeavour now to ſhew you, by ſome ſhort and plain Application. Eph. 2. 12.

Application.

Firſt, *It ſerves to ſilence thoſe who rob God of his peculiar, or, at leaſt, of his glory in having a peculiar people*: as thoſe do, who aſſert the death of Chriſt to have been equally intended for all; thoſe, who lay all the ſucceſs of Chriſts undertakings, and of grace offered, upon the arbitrary, uncertain determination and compliance of mans fallible, nay, corrupted, *will*. By which means it may come to paſs, (nay, were it ſo, it would come to paſs certainly) that God ſhould have no peculiar people: for the corrupt will cannot encline to cloſe with grace, till grace ſubdue the perverſneſs of it;

or, to ſpeak the beſt, ſhould God have a peculiar upon this account, he muſt account himſelf beholding to man for it, who determined himſelf to accept of thoſe offers, all which would otherwiſe have been in vain and ineffectual. It would be moſt eaſie to anſwer that queſtion of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.*4.7. *Who maketh thee to differ?* or, *What haſt thou which thou haſt not received?* Lord, might the ſoul ſay, *I have this actual acceptance of thy grace offered, which I never received.* But Scripture hath taught us the contrary language; *It is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleaſure,* Phil. 2.13. therefore we cannot will before grace, becauſe grace worketh the will. So to aſſert any fore-ſeen conditions in us, as the motives of God's eternal love, is to rob God of the glory which he hath of peculiarizing a people to himſelf; for, upon this account, God did not chooſe us, but we him; whereas the Apoſtle tells us, 1 *John* 4.19. *We love God becauſe he firſt loved us.* God loves his people into holineſs, not becauſe they were ſo, either in themſelves, or in his fore-ſight: no, *When I ſaw thee polluted in thy bloud, behold, this time was the time of love,* ſaith God, *Ezek.* 16.6, 8. God could fore-ſee no conditions as furure in his people, but what his own will determined to work in them: and nothing could move him to will it, but free and undeſerved grace and love. So, thoſe, who aſſert *the ſufficiency of natural light to the ſalvation of the heathens,* pull down God's incloſure, and lay all in common, without any peculiarity of priviledge to thoſe who enjoy the Goſpel and Ordinances, which in the Apoſtles judgement peculiariz'd the Jews of old, *What advantage then hath the Jew* (ſaith he, *Rom.*3.1, 2.) *much every way, chiefly becauſe that unto them were committed the oracles of God.*

Uſe 2. Secondly, *Let it be a warning to wicked men, to have a care how they in any kinde injure the godly:* they are God's peculiar; he hath a ſpecial care and tenderneſs of reſpect towards them: all the injuries you do them reflect upon God. Thou reproacheſt and revileſt them, *nick-nam'ſt* and *ſcoff'ſt* at them, *Iſa.*37.23,24. but doſt thou think n the mean time that thou reproacheſt God by this? Thou *perſecuteſt* them, and doſt thou think by it thou *perſecuteſt* Chriſt himſelf? *Acts* 9.4. Thou oppreſſeſt them, and doſt thou think that he that *toucheth them, toucheth the apple of God's eye?* Zach.2.8. that's a part ſenſible of the leaſt offence; therefore (ſaith God, *Pſal.*105.15.) *touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.* Let wicked men aſſure themſelves, that the godly, whom they perſecute and butcher, will one day be thorns in their ſides, they do but *kick againſt the pricks,* as *Paul,* Acts 9.5. What will you do when God comes *to make inquiſition for bloud?* be ſure God will *avenge the*

quarrel

quarrel of his peculiar ones. God expreſſeth his care and tenderneſs of his people, by his *carrying them upon eagles wings*, *Exod.19.* 4. It is obſerved of the Eagle, that ſhe onely of all the creatures carries her young ones upon her wings for their ſecuritie, that whoever ſhoot at the young ones cannot hurt them, but through her wings; wicked men cannot injure the people of God, but they wound God himſelf; and will not *God avenge the quarrel of his elect*, which indeed is his own? yes, *he will avenge it ſuddenly*, Luke 18. 7, 8.

Thirdly, *This gives us an account why the world doth not fall about the ears of wicked men.* God hath his peculiar people, and ſome not yet gathered in: till they be compleated, the world ſhall endure. If there had been but ten of theſe peculiar people in *Sodom*, God had ſpared it. So ſoon as *Methuſelah* is dead, then comes the floud. Godly men are the pillars of the world, which uphold it from overwhelming wicked men: *I bear up the pillars of it*, ſaith *David*, Pſal. 75. 3. God ſuffers the *tares* to grow for the *wheats* ſake, *Matth.*13. 30. The Saints are the ſecuritie of the place wherein they live; *Sodom* was ſafe whileſt *Lot* was in it, *Gen.*19.22. *Iſrael* ſafe whileſt *Joſiah* lived, 2 *Kings* 22. 19. *Hippo* could never be ſpoiled whileſt *Auguſtin* lived, as *Poſidonius* tells us in his life: and *Luther*, it is ſaid, while he lived, by his prayers kept off the civil wars from *Germany*. *Moſes* ſtood in the *gap*, and prevented the deſtruction of the *murmuring Iſraelites*, Pſal. 106. 23. *Phineas* ſtays the plague. *Uſe* 3.

Fourthly, *Then cenſure not the godly, as guilty of unneceſſary preciſeneſs, or affected ſingularitie, if they be more ſcrupulous and ſtrict, and fearfull of ſin then others are.* Wicked men ſtrange at this, as the Apoſtle tells you, 1 *Pet*, 4.4. *They think it ſtrange that you run not with them to the ſame exceſs of riot, ſpeaking evil of you.* Beloved, if ſeriouſly weighed, it is no matter of wonder; for they have peculiar engagements to holineſs upon them: the preſence of diſtinguiſhing love to engage them againſt ſin; as *Joſeph* argues from the ſpecial favours he had received from his Maſter, to the avoidance of injuring him, *Gen* 39.9. ſo Saints from determinating love. *Chriſt hath redeemed me*; and is not a redeemed bondſlave under ſpecial engagements of homage to his Lord? *What, ſhall I wound my Saviour by ſin, who hath already been wounded for it?* Beſides, Saints are ſenſible of their engagements. No man in the world but hath ſufficient engagement upon him to holineſs, merely upon the account of Creation, Providences, and common mercies; but their inſenſibleneſs is the cauſe of their unthankfulneſs: but Saints live in a meditation, and under a ſenſe of mercy, *thy loving kindneſs*, ſaith *Uſe* 4.

David

David, Pſal.26.3.) *is before mine eyes.* Their ſlips are more diſhonourable to God, then the ſins of others. God's honour is wounded, and his ways reproached by reaſon of their ſins; therefore in tenderneſs to the honour of God, they are engaged in a fear of, and watchfulneſs againſt ſin; beſides, they have a principle within acting them to holineſs: they have experience of the *beauties of holineſs*, and that peace which the practiſe of it brings in to them: and they have more to loſe then others by ſin, the ſenſe of Love, the ſmiles of a Father, the light of God's countenance. They cannot ſin ſo cheap as others can; you may pardon them well, if they fear the loſs of their peace, Divine Eclipſes and withdrawings; if they dread *broken bones*, which a *David* cries out of, *Pſal.*51. 8. after a wilfull ſin.

Uſe 5. Fifthly, *Let this lay a threefold engagement upon Gods peculiar*;

I. *Unto thankfulneſs.* Pſal. 135.2,3,4. *Ye that ſtand in the houſe of the Lord, in the courts of our God, praiſe the Lord, for the Lord is good, for the Lord hath choſen Jacob unto himſelf, and Iſrael for his peculiar treaſure.* Special praiſes ſhould be the Echo of peculiar mercies. You may finde the Church magnifying Chriſt upon this very account, *Rev.* 5.9. The Doctrine of *univerſalitie of grace* deſtroys all thankfulneſs, unleſs to our ſelves; makes all the ſacrifices of praiſes needleſs, *ſacrificing to our own nets*, applauding the power and freedome of our own wills. It is diſcriminating grace will raiſe the ſoul to thankfull admirations of God, in that language of *Judas* (not *Iſcariot*) *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifeſt thy ſelf unto us, and not unto the world*, John 14. 22.

II. *To love*; both to *God*, who thus peculiariz'd you, and to love one another. However your heads may differ, let your hearts unite: you are *Temples* of the ſame *Spirit*; *ſpouſe* of the ſame *huſband*; *members* of the ſame *bodie*, 1 *Cor.* 12 25, 27. and (what greater argument of love?) you are purchaſed by the ſame bloud, ſanctified by the ſame Spirit, objects of the ſame ſpecial love; and, I am ſure, the Apoſtle from hence argues ſtrongly for *brotherly love*: *Beloved, if God ſo loved us,* (ſaith he, 1 *John* 4. 10,11.) *we ought alſo to love one another.* You are *eodem ſanguine glutinati*, as *Auguſtine expreſſeth it*: and is *Chriſt divided?* It is the check the Apoſtle gives to the uncharitable diſſentions of the Church of *Corinth*, 1 Cor. 3. 13. And laſtly you are deſigned for the ſame glorie.

III. *To ſpecial ſervice for, and obedience to God.* Diſcriminating mercies are in all reaſon to be improved as arguments to peculiar ſervices: τί περισσὸν ποιεῖτε *Matth.* 5. 47. *What do ye more then others?*

thers? as if he had ſaid; *more is expected from my diſciples, then from the Publicans; as your priviledges are peculiar, ſo ſhould your ſervices be too;*

For,

1. *This is the proper intendment of diſtinguiſhing mercie: the end of God's peculiar diſpenſations to a perſon or nation.* Obſerve what God ſaith of Iſrael, *Deut.* 26. 18. *The Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people*: but to what end? *that thou ſhouldeſt keep his commandments.* Hath God diſtinguiſhed thee by Electing love? the end of it is thy Holineſs: *He hath choſen us that we may be holy, and without blame before him*, Epheſ. 1. 4. Hath he peculiariz'd thee by Effectual grace and Vocation? It is that thou mayſt be *holy*, 1 Theſſal. 4. 7. *For God hath not called us unto uncleanneſs, but unto holineſs.* Art thou Chriſt's by a peculiar purchaſe? the end of it is thy Holineſs, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. *For you are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God in your bodies, and in your ſpirits.* Hath God exerciſed any peculiar providences towards thee? the end of them is thy obedience. The *Pſalmiſt* having ſpoken of all the Providences God exerciſed over Iſrael, infers this as the juſt iſſue of them; *That they might obſerve his ſtatutes and keep his laws*, Pſal. 105. 45. So God's peculiar Covenant engageth to Holineſs, for it is mutual. The end of God's peculiar Chaſtiſements is his peoples Holineſs, *Hebr.* 12. 10. *God chaſteneth*, ſaith he, *for our profit: that we might be partakers of his holineſs.* And then the hopes of that peculiar Glorie we are deſigned to, ſhould engage to Holineſs, 1 *John* 3. 3. *Every man that hath this hope purifieth himſelf.* The ſpecial Sealing of the Spirit tends to this, that we be careful that by ſin we do not *grieve* him, *Epheſ.* 4. 30. ſo the end of Communion with God is Holineſs: what elſe makes the Angels and Saints in heaven more holy but this? Thus you ſee, you fruſtrate the end of Mercy, if it doth not make you more holy.

2. *It is the moſt ingenuous return of gratitude, which we can make to God for his diſtinguiſhing love.* Sins under mercies, as they have the higheſt guilt, ſo are arguments of the greateſt diſingenuitie. What, *Do you thus requite the Lord?* Deut. 32. 6. Obedience is the beſt thankfulneſs: without which our verbal returns for mercy are but a complement. The thankfulneſs of the life redounds to the honour and praiſe of God in the world: and this God expects from his peculiar people, if you conſult that pregnant Scripture, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. *Ye are a choſen peculiar people, that ye ſhould ſhew forth the praiſes of him,*

who hath called you, &c. Otherwiſe God is thus reproached by your ſinfulneſs: "Yonder's a people who boaſt of being God's peculiar; do not you obſerve they live as other men do? they can cheat in their ſhops, diſſemble in their dealings, be frothy and vain in their diſcourſes, live in neglect of Familie-duties, as deeply immerſed in the love of the world, as compliant with every fooliſh faſhion, as ambitious of honour, as falſe in their promiſes as others, whom they cenſure as of the world and caſt-awaies. But now ſaith Chriſt, *Herein is my Father glorified, if ye bear much fruit*, &c. John 15. 8.

Queſtion. *But how ſhall I know whether I be one of God's peculiar people, or not?*

Anſwer. The Text is hemmed in with a double evidence, ſo that which way ſoever you caſt your eyes, you may diſcover if you examine impartially. Καθαείσῃ, and ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων, *puriſie* goes before, and *zealous of good works* comes after: ſo that inward Purity, and outward Conformitie, a pure Heart, and a holy Life, are the two ſpecial Evidences of God's peculiar: for they are both the iſſue, and fruits of that faith, whereby we have a peculiar intereſt in Chriſt, *Acts* 15. 9. *Purifying their hearts by faith*; there is the former; and for the latter, *Gal.* 5. 6. *Faith works by love.*

I. Then, art thou inwardly purified from ſpiritual pollutions? elſe thou art none of God's peculiar as yet. *Thou becameſt mine*, ſaies God, *Ezek.* 16. 8. What then? *Why then waſhed I thee with water, yea, I throughly waſhed away thy bloud*, verſe 9. Elſe thou art no branch engrafted into Chriſt, for *every branch he purgeth*, John 15. 2.

II. Art thou holy in thy *outward converſation?* God's peculiar are an holy people, *Deut.* 14. 1, 2. *For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath choſen thee to be a peculiar people.* To pretend to a peculiarity of intereſt in God, while men willingly continue wallowing in the mire of iniquitie, is a deſperate ſoul-damning preſumption. If you would lay any claim to God's privie-Seal of Election, you muſt bring, and be able to ſhew the broad-Seal of Holineſs. Mark how the Apoſtle joyns theſe together, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. *The foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this ſeal, The Lord knoweth them that are his*: And, *Let every one that nameth the name of Chriſt, depart from iniquity*: yea, and follow Holineſs too. The Apoſtle ſpeaks fully, 2 *Corinth.* 7. 1. *Let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holi-*

neſs

neſs in the fear of God. Ζηλωτὴς, in the Text, *Zealous*; not cold or luke-warm, but chearfull and induſtrious in the practiſe of Pietie; and thus you may evidence your ſelves to be of that *peculiar people*, whom Chriſt gave himſelf to redeem; ſo ſaith the Text, *Who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquitie, and purifie unto himſelf a peculiar people zealous of good works.*

FINIS.

THE UNHAPPINESS of the Wordly-Mans PORTION,

Set forth in a Sermon preached in S. *Marie's* Church in *Cambridge*, May 25. *Anno Dom.* 1654.

By JOHN FROST, *B. D.* and then Fellow of S. *JOHNS* Colledge in *Cambridge*, and late Paſtor of *Olaves-Hart-ſtreet* in *London.*

Mundus iſte periculoſior eſt blandus, quàm moleſtus: magis cavendus, cùm ſe allicit diligi, quàm cùm admonet, cogitq; contemni. Auguſt. ad Dioſc.

Quid vis utrùm amare temporalia, & tranſire cùm tempore: an mundum non amare, & in æternum vivere cum Deo? Aug. in 1 Epiſt. Joh. c. 2. v. 17.

CAMBRIDGE:
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Anno Dom. MDCLVII.

To the

WORSHIPFULL

CAPTAIN

THOMAS OGLE,

ESQUIRE,

Increaſe of Grace, ſtrength of Bodie, and perfection of Vertue.

Worthy Sir;

SInce it is thought fit by ſome, at the importunitie of many, that theſe Sermons ſhould come forth in publick: I have attempted to Dedicate the ſame to you, in reſpect of your many favours, and my obligations. You were pleaſed to honour the Authour with the tuition of your firſt-born, Mr. *Aſhfield Ogle*, the excellencie of your ſtrength, the hopes of his countrey, the delight of all that knew him; who prevented his Tutour in the heavenly glory, but he ſoon followed after him: and, I truſt, as they oft converſed and prayed together here on earth, ſo they are now together praiſing God, and ſinging *Halleluiah* in heaven.

Sir,

Sir, the title to theſe is not unfitly yours; for you are one of thoſe, whoſe portion is not in this life onely: but you have a glorious inheritance reſerved for you in the heavens, through the free-grace of God our Saviour, who came into the world to ſave ſinners; to whoſe grace I commend you, and your vertuous Conſort, and reſolve my ſelf,

SIR,

Your Worſhips

in all due obſervance,

JOHN FROST.

Psalm 17. 14.

Which have their portion in this life.

THat there is a *providence* watching over the world, ordering, and diſpoſing the *events*, and ſeeing to the management of things here below, hath been, and is as univerſal an acknowledgement, as that there is a *God*. But the *myſteriouſneſs* of Gods *outgoings* in his *providences* hath oft occaſioned the *Atheiſme* of ſome, and the *diſtruſt* of others: eſpecially in that ſeeming-unequal diſtribution of theſe *temporal bleſsings* with a full and liberal hand to the *worſt* of men, whileſt the *beſt* have no other portion carved out for them, but the *bread* and *water* of *affliction*; as if God had no regard unto the world, but all events happened by careleſs *chance* and *fortune*. Scarce any Queſtion troubled and perplexed the antient Philoſophers more then this; *Quare malis bona, & bonis mala eveniunt? Why the worſt of men often enjoyed the beſt of the world?* this occaſioned the *Stoicks Fate*, and *Epicures Atheiſme*: this made ſome of them call in queſtion the *Juſtice*, others quarrel with the *Providence*, a third ſort to deny the *Being* of God. To conſider that *Licinus* was entombed in a *ſtately marble*, grave *Cato* confin'd to a *ſtrait* and *narrow ſepulchre*, valiant *Pompey* laid in none at all, made them draw this inference, *Credimus eſſe deos? ſhall we think there are any gods?* which *Lipſius* ſaith were *affectuum voces, non judiciorum*. Nay, the Scripture tells us how this hath often occaſioned doubtfull repining *diſtruſts* in, and ſhaken the faith of the beſt of Gods Saints. *Jeremy* deſires to enter a *diſpute* with God concerning the *righteouſneſs* of his *judgements* in this particular, *Jer*, 12. 1, 2. which hence appears to have been his weakneſs and infirmitie, becauſe in the midſt of this diſtruſt he acknowledges Gods juſtice in all his *proceedings*. With this *Job* ſeems to be diſ-ſatisfied, and under a preſent temptation to queſtion God, *Job* 21. from verſ. 7. to verſ. 16. and the Prophet *Habakkuk*, chap. 1. v. 13. and *David*, that *man after Gods own heart*, was oft aſſaulted with this temptation to *diſtruſt*, upon conſideration of the *flouriſhing eſtate* of many wicked in the world, *Pſal.* 73. from verſ. 2. to the 8. to conſider that *they* were not plagued, v. 5. and *he* plagued all the *day long*, verſ. 14. This tempted *David* to three great miſcarriages;

Lips. Manud. ad Philoſ. Stoic.

First, to conceive of *piety* and *holineſs*, as an *uſeleſs*, *vain*, *unprofi-*

 table,

table thing, verſ. 13. when he ſaw *pietie* perſecuted, and *wickedneſs* enthroned.

Secondly, To *uncharitable raſh judging of the Saints*, v. 15. intimating his temptation to ſay ſo; ſo apt are men to judge the *ſtraighteſt* ſtaffe *crooked* in the water, and the moſt *upright* Saint *hypocritical*, when afflicted.

Thirdly, *To queſtion providence*, ver. 11. as if the eye of God could not ſee theſe diſorders in the world, and permit them; ſo liable is the faith of the beſt to weakneſs and infirmities: which *David* could not conquer, till he went into the *Sanctuary* of God, and underſtood the miſerable end of wicked men, what-ever ſeeming happineſs they enjoy here, v. 17, and that their *portion* was onely in *this life*, as he ſaith here in the Text; which words may fall under a threefold conſideration.

1. As the *ground* of *Davids* prayer for deliverance from his enemies, *v.* 13.

2. As the *matter* and *ſupport* of *Davids* comfort, under the perſecutions of his enemies: that though *Saul* (upon whoſe perſecution this *Pſalm* was penned, ſaith *Muſculus*) flouriſh'd and oppreſſed him here, yet he had but his *portion* in *this life*, and *David* though at preſent perſecuted and afflicted, ſupported himſelf by the expectation of his future glory, ver. 15.

3. As a *deſcription* of the *miſery* of *wicked* men, amidſt all the pomp, and glory, and enjoyments of the world; while they are the worlds *darlings* and mens *envy*; while ſet upon the *pinacle* of worldly greatneſs, here's their miſery and unhappineſs, they have *their portion* onely *in this life*.

Doctrine. *It is a miſerable thing for men to have their portions onely in this life.*

In proſecution of which I ſhall do four things.

Firſt, I ſhall ſhew that wicked men have often the greateſt portion in the world.

Secondly, How it comes to paſs that they have ſo, to vindicate the juſtneſs, and equitie, and wiſdome of Gods providence in ordering it thus.

Thirdly, Upon what accounts it is a miſerable thing to have it ſo.

Fourthly, I ſhall improve all in ſome ſhort inferences, or brief application.

Firſt, To ſhew that wicked men have often the greateſt portion in the world: I need not ſpeak much to this, the experience of all ages ſince the beginning of the world confirms it, your own obſervation, I believe, can ſeal to it; how-ever Scripture abundantly evinces it. The firſt *murderer* that ever was, carries poſſeſſion in his very name: *Cain* ſignifies ſo much; *Gen.* 4. 8.

Go

Go on in the whole ſeries of Scripture, and you ſhall finde *Joſeph* perſecuted by his *brethren*; *Eſau* (as *Rivet* obſerves on *Gen.* 32.) advanced in the world for a time far above *Jacob*; go on, and you finde the *Iſraelites* Gods peculiar in captivitie, and *Pharoah* upon the throne; *Saul* ruling, and *David* in a cave, or in a wilderneſs; *Job* upon the dung-hill; *Jeremy* in the dungeon; *Daniel* in the den, and the *Children* in the furnace, and *Nebuchadnezzar* on the throne. In the new Teſtament you have *Felix* on the bench, S. *Paul* at the bar; *Dives* in the palace, *Lazarus* at his gates: *Luke* 16. 19. *he* cloathed in purple, *Lazarus* in rags, and over-ſpread with ſores; *he* banqueted and *fared deliciouſly every day*, the *other* deſired but *the crumbs from the table* and could not have them; *Dives* beſet with his pomp and ſtately attendance, *Lazarus* hath no other ſociety but the dogs which came to *lick his ſores*, *v.* 21. all which *Auſtin* and *Tertullian*, *lib.* 4. againſt *Marcion*, conceive to be a true hiſtorie of what was really acted, though others think it parabolical; *Job* tells us that *the tabernacles of robbers* ſometimes proſper, *Job* 12.6. which proſperity he at large deſcribes, chap. 21. from v. 7 to v. 14. exalted in *power*, v. 7. multiplyed in their *poſterity*, v. 8. 11. ſafe at *home*, v. 9. encreaſed *abroad*, v. 10. have their *fill of pleaſure*, v. 12. and *wealth at will*, v. 13. *David* ſpeaks his own experience of this, Pſa. 37. 35. Pſa. 73. 7. So in the Text, they enjoy not onely common favours, as aire to breath in, earth to walk on; but the treaſure of the world, the riches of nature: their bellies are fill'd with his *hid treaſure*, and that not for themſelves onely, but for their poſterity too, *they leave the reſt of their ſubſtance to their babes*, in a word they *have their portion in this life*.

Qu. But who are theſe wicked men? *Anſ.* In a word, Thoſe who have a full affluence of the world and theſe earthly things, and yet are ſuch as the Apoſtle deſcribes *Eph.* 2. 12. *ſtrangers to the covenant of grace*: who can ſay that eſtate is mine, and that honour mine, and thoſe lands are mine; but cannot upon any ground ſay, God is mine, Chriſt is mine, the covenant is mine, you have them drawn to the life, Luk. 12. 21. ſuch who have the *world* for a *portion*, but cannot ſay with David, *The Lord is my portion*.

Secondly, They have a *portion* here upon a five-fold account.

1. As the iſſue of that univerſal providence, which God exerciſeth in the world, to which every creature owes its being and proviſion; they are cloathed by the ſame hand of univerſal providence, which *arrays the lillies*, nouriſhed by that bountie, which *feeds the ravens*, and ſupplied from that hand, which when God *opens*, *he filleth every living thing with good*. Pſa. 104. 28. God will look to his whole creation, as a Lord provides for his meaneſt ſlave, though he in-

tends him not the inheritance. The whole world lives at Gods charges and allowance, as he is the Soveraign and univerſal Lord; and to the worſt of men, for whom he hath not reſolved and laid out the inheritance of ſons, yet he gives them a *portion here*, as they are creatures. That is the firſt account.

2. As the reſult of that patience and long-ſuffering, which God (while he expects their return, and ſolicites their repentance) exerciſeth towards the worſt of men: For though God ſometime to demonſtrate the juſt demerit of every ſin, his hatred of it, and ſeverity againſt it, and the more effectually to awaken and deter others from the imitation of it, ſtrikes a ſinner in the act of his iniquity; of which *Ananias* and *Sapphira* for their *ſacrilege*, *Corah* and his companie for their *rebellion*, the *children* for *mocking the Prophet*, 2 Kings 2. and *Herod* for his *pride*, Acts 12. are ſad Scripture inſtances; yet it's the more uſual method of Gods proceedings, to demonſtrate that he *waits to be gracious*, and that *mercy pleaſeth him*, and by his *long-ſuffering* to *lead them to repentance*, Rom. 2. 4. *Romani non ideo tanti quòd religioſi, ſed quòd impunè ſacrilegi, neque enim potuerunt in ipſis bellis deos adjutores habere, adverſùs quos arma rapuerunt*; *Arnob. adverſ. Gent. p.* 226. And to ſhew that our ſins wreſt the arrows of his judgements from his hands, he lengthens out his patience to ſinners, during which time he often makes them an honourable allowance in the world, the more powerfully by outward favours to win them to himſelf; or if not, to render them the more *inexcuſable*, while by deſpiſing that *patience and goodneſs*, they *treaſure up unto themſelves wrath againſt the day of wrath*, Rom. 2. 5. As a Judge oft deſigns a fair allowance for a condemned malefactour, while reprieved by his mercy, till the day of execution, and provides that he ſtarve not in priſon. Thus wicked men, though now ſentenced and condemned (for, *he that believes not is condemned already*, ſaith our Saviour, *Joh.* 3. 18.) God gives them a *portion in this life*, to maintain themſelves till the day of death, and execution by his juſtice.

3. As the iſſue of that *univerſal goodneſs* and *mercie*, which God demonſtrates to his whole creation: for, *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works*, Pſal. 145. 9. From hence it is that he cauſeth his *ſun to ſhine upon the good and bad*, Matth. 5. 45. And God oft doth wicked men good by theſe *outward bleſſings*, while the enjoyment of them prevents many ſins, which *want* and *povertie* might betray them to: and they, as being of a ſordid, baſe, mercenary ſpirit, are oft *bribed* by theſe to give God an *outward* obſervance, to *abſtain* from many ſins, and to *comply* with an *outſide* Religion, for fear of forfeiting their enjoyments by the ſeverer

verer judgements of God, or ſome ſtricter Laws of the Land; *& dum fortunam amittere metuunt, nequitiam derelinquunt*; which is the account profound *Bradwardine* gives of Gods providence in this particular, that hereby they might be encouraged to a compliance with Religion, if not out of *love*, yet out of *intereſt*; if not for *love* of *vertue*, yet for *fear* of *loſs* and *puniſhment*, which is the moſt ordinary principle of mens Religion; for though *meliores ſunt quos ducit amor*, yet *plures ſunt quos corrigit timor*, ſaith *Auſtin*. It is more ingenuous to *obey* God out of *love*, but more common to *ſerve* him out of *fear*: thus if nor love to Chriſts *perſon*, nor his *doctrine*, yet deſire of the *loaves* will procure Chriſt many followers. You ſhall oft ſee wicked men complying with Religion outwardly upon carnal intereſt, and for worldly advantages. As a diſſembling *lover* covets the *portion* more then the *perſon*; ſo do men *court* Religion, to get or keep their portion in this life. *Bradw. p. 281*

4. As the effect and iſſue of Gods *remunerating juſtice*. There is none ſo profligate, or debaucht, but hath ſomething though not of *ſpiritual*, yet of *moral* and *civil* goodneſs, as rewards to which God lays them out a portion here, to demonſtrate that love God bears to all goodneſs where-ever he finde it. The *Phariſees* hypocrital *prayers* and *faſtings* have their *reward* here, Mat. 6. 5. *Ahabs* counterfeit humiliation protracts the threatned judgement, 1 Kings 21. 29. *Iehu's* falſe *zeal* is recompenced with a kingdome for four generations, 2 Kings 10. 30. So *Ezekiel* 29. 18, 19, 20. *Nebuchad-rezzar* had his reward for ſerving againſt *Egypt*. The Heathens morality, in *Auſtin's* judgement, brought them in a double advantage; firſt, of a *lighter puniſhment* hereafter; for *mitiùs erit*, the *fornace* is made hotter for a *Cataline*, then a *Cato*, or *Ariſtides*: and then with *outward temporal proſperity* here; for he imputes the glory, magnificence, ſtate, and largeneſs of the *Romane Empire* to thoſe *moral* vertues, wherein they excelled other Nations, as *love to their countrey*, *liberality*, *divitias honeſtas volebant*, *juſtice* and *equity*, not *enervating* their minds, or *emaſculating* their bodies by ſordid *pleaſures*, and the like: *quibus moribus meruerunt ut Deus verus, quamvis non eum colerent, eorum augeret imperium: for theſe the true God* (though nor worſhipt nor acknowledged by them) *enlarged their Empire & dominions*. In a word, as God ſees in the beſt of men ſome ſins to puniſh and purge, for which he lays them out affliction in this life; ſo he oft findes ſome good in wicked men, for which, not as the *merit* of that good, but as a *demonſtration* of his *love* to, and to give encouragement to goodneſs, he gives out to wicked men a portion in this life. *Aug. de Civ. Dei.* *Ibid. l. 5. c. 12.*

5. As the means of *good* and *ſpiritual advantage* to Gods own

people, which next to his own *glory* God deſigns as the end of all his *providential* diſpenſations in the world. They are all for the triall, inſtruction, exerciſe, and comfort of Gods people; ſo is this particular *providence* of God, in diſtributing to wicked men a portion in this life, and that in theſe particulars.

Firſt, As it is a juſt encouragement to them to go on cheerfully in the ways of God upon an aſſurance of a better portion in another life; which *David* ſeems here to reſpect v. 15. as if he had ſaid, *If they have their portion here, I ſhall certainly have it hereafter, when I ſhall behold the face of God in righteouſneſs.* And certainly, if God rewards the ſhews of goodneſs in wicked men with a portion in this life; ſhall he not reward thy *real* holineſs with glory in another life? if thoſe who are prodigalls, who run away from God, have the *huskes* to fill them; ſhalt not thou have *bread* in thy fathers houſe? If *Jehu's* zeal, Ahab's humiliation, the *Phariſees* prayer and faſting, though all but counterfeit, go not without their reward in this life; ſhall thy *true zeal* for God, *heartie repentance* for ſin, *fervent prayer* for mercy not be rewarded hereafter? Look as thoſe afflictions, which the Saints ſuffer here, are ſure and ſad arguments of that eternal wrath and deſtruction, which the juſtice of God ſhall deal out to wicked ungodly men hereafter, as the Apoſtle evidently argues, 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 4, 5, 6, 7. (Saints, the Jews were wont to compare to *green trees*, as the wicked to *drie trees*, as our Saviour argues, Luk. 23. 31. if the Saints (and it is the reaſon *Boetius* gives, why wicked men ſometimes are permited to perſecute the godly, *ut exercitii bonis & malis eſſet cauſa ſupplicii*) be caſt into the furnace of affliction, *drie trees*, wicked men, ſhall certainly be *fuel* for eternal flames.) ſo the earthly happineſs of the wicked may give the godly aſſurance of everlaſting happineſs in another life. Let me beſpeak you as did Chriſt his diſciples, *Luke* 12. 32. *fear not little flock*; if the dogs have the *crumbs* under the table, queſtionleſs the children ſhall have *bread*. They may divide the kingdomes of the world: well; be aſſured, *it is your Fathers good pleaſure to give you a kingdome* in another. It is an excellent obſervation of *Calvin* upon Gods rewarding the *Rechabites* obedience, *Jerem.* 35. 19. *Scimus*, ſaith he, *Deum ſæpe mercedem rependere umbris virtutum ut oſtendat ſibi placere virtutes ipſas.* God oft recompenſeth the ſhadows and ſeeming appearances of vertue to ſhew that complacencie he takes in, and ample rewards he hath reſerved for true and ſincere piety.

Grotius in Luk. 23. 31.

Secondly, As it is a demonſtration of the worthleſſneſs, and vanity of theſe earthly things: and ſo alienates and eſtranges their affections to them. *Parciùs ſolent piis contingere, quò magis illis rebus honos*

honos & pretium detrahatur, ſaies *Grotius*. *Hoc eſt propoſitum Deo, ut ſapienti viro oſtenderet hæc, quæ vulgus appetit, & reformidat, nec bona eſſe, nec mala*, the heathen *Seneca* gives this account of Gods providence, it is his meaning and deſign to demonſtrate to good men, that thoſe afflictions, which the world ſo much fears, are not evil, ſeeing God oft lays them upon the beſt of men, nor thoſe enjoyments, which the world with ſo eager deſires purſues, abſolutely good, ſeeing they are oft given to the worſt, *apparebunt enim bona eſſe, ſi illa non niſi bonis viris tribueret, & mala eſſe, ſi malis tantùm irrogaverit*; afflictions would appear as abſolutely in themſelves evil, ſhould wicked men onely feel them, and the world as chiefly good and deſirable, ſhould good men onely enjoy it. But this conſideration, that the worſt of men have oft the greateſt portion of the world, how may it deaden the Saints affections to, and quench all intemperate heates of deſires after the things of this world, and teach them to undervalue and diſeſteem thoſe pearls, which they oft ſee caſt before *ſwine*. *Nullo modo poteſt deus concupita magis traducere, quàm ſi illa ad turpiſſimos defert, ab optimis abigit*, ſaith the heathen *Seneca*.

Grotius in Math. 6.33.

Seneca, pag. 387.

This providence of God may moſt powerfully work in us a diſaffection to theſe earthly enjoyments. How ſhould this pull down the towering and ambitious thoughts of men; to conſider that cruel *Neroes*, ungodly *Caligulaes*, apoſtate *Julians*, have oft their *crowns* and *Scepters*? How ſhould this take of all immoderate covetous cares for the world, to conſider that the fool in the Goſpel had his *full barns*? And this ſhould teach Chriſtians to abhor that fooliſh affectation of *delicious fare*, and *coſtly arrayment*, to thinke that *Dives*, now roaring in hell, in his life time enjoyed both theſe in abundance.

Thirdly, As it is an occaſional means of trying his peoples grace, and heightning their glory. *Datur occaſio majoris meriti & coronæ*, is the account *Leſſius*, in his tract *de providentia numinis*, gives of this Providence of God. Had no *perſecuters*, no *Neroes*, no *Caligulaes* ever flouriſhed, the glory of the Martyrs *patience*, *faith*, and *conſtancy* had been obſcured. As *Jacob* diſcovered the ſincerity of his affection to *Rachel*, that he *continued* to love her, notwithſtanding all the *hard uſage* he endured for her ſake: thus the luſter of the Saints *meekneſs* and *humilitie* ſhines through thoſe reproaches and ſcandals, which the world caſts upon them; they are all but *foyles* to ſet of the beautie and glory of Chriſtians graces. The portions of wicked men in this life, are eſpecially *tryals* of the ſincerity of a Chriſtians *affection* to God, and *love* to holineſs; whoſe ſoul can burn in a *holy flame* of divine love, though not fomented

mented, nor cheriſhed by the *fewel* of outward *proſperitie*. That is the *hotteſt* flame, which is encreaſed by its contrary cold; thus is the flame of true love augmented by an *Antiperiſtaſis* of croſſes and afflictions. It is a kinde of ſpiritual *ſimonie*, not love, which muſt be *bribed* by theſe outward enjoyments. And as this tries their grace, ſo it adds to their glory: *Quantò plus tormenti, tantò plus erit gloriæ*, ſaith *Seneca*. The perſecutions of the Heathen Emperours added new *pearls* to the Martyrs *crowns:* and the Apoſtle aſſures us, that the *light afflictions* which the Saints ſuffer here, (whileſt wicked men oft flouriſh) do *work* out for them *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17.

Thirdly, Wherein lies the miſery of that man who hath his portion onely in this life. It appears miſerable from Scripture; Luke 6. 24. *But wo unto you that are rich; for you have received your conſolation.* So, *Wo unto them that are at eaſe in Zion, &c. Amos* 6. 1. and ſo it muſt needs be upon a ſix-fold account.

I. Becauſe he hath no *real ſatisfaction* in this portion, as to his *better part*. He vexeth and diſquieteth himſelf to get and preſerve his portion, and when he hath done all, he *graſps the winde*, and *courts vanity:* he is filled with nothing but emptineſs: *he ſhall not feel quietneſs*, Job 20. 22. And being *without God*, who is the onely *reſt* and *centre* of ſouls, he is as far from *true ſatisfaction*, as from *real happineſs*. The Goſpel brands him for a *fool*, who dream'd of a *requiem* to his ſoul from his *full barns*, Luke 12. 20. Where there is *ſatisfaction*, there muſt be *ſuitableneſs* and *proportion*; and that cannot be between the *world* and the *ſoul:* therefore *diſ ſatisfaction* is entailed upon the fulleſt enjoyments of the world, if you believe *Solomon, He that loveth ſilver ſhall not be ſatisfied with ſilver, nor he that loveth abundance with increaſe: this is alſo vanitie*, Eccles. 5. 10. Now I appeal to you, how ſad is it for men to have ſouls made capable of an *enjoyment* of God, and *happineſs* in eternity, and yet to enjoy nothing but a *diſ-ſatisfying* portion in this ſhort and vain life. Methinks, the ſoul of man is like *Noahs* dove: a *wicked* mans ſoul is like the dove *out* of the Ark in a conſtant motion and ever reſtleſs; but a *pious* ſoul is like the dove *returned* to the Ark, taking up its reſt in God. And herein is the excellencie of a Chriſtians portion, though he hath nothing in the world, that whereas the greateſt portion of the wicked worldling brings him in nothing but *vanity & vexation*, a Chriſtian inherits *full ſatisfaction* in his portion, as *David* adds ver. 15. *I ſhall behold thy face in righteouſneſs:* there's his, and every Chriſtians portion, viz. *the enjoyment of God:* and then ſee the *ſatisfaction* entayled upon this portion, *When I awake* (ſaith he) *I ſhall be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs.*

II. Be-

II. Becauſe he enjoyes it without the *love* of God. His portion argues not the truth of Gods love to his perſon; for being out of Chriſt, God accepts him not: *Epheſ.* 1.6. it is in the *beloved* onely that our perſons are *accepted:* nor doth it ſpeak Gods approbation of their wayes, the *holineſs* and *purity* of his nature permits not that. What comfort is it to enjoy the world with the *frowns* and *diſpleaſure* of God? what comfort in *corn*, and *wine*, and *oyl*, without the *light of Gods countenance*, Pſal. 4.7. The ſence of the love of God ſweetens the leaſt enjoyment and portion in the world: *pulſe* and *water* are *delicious fare* with theſe. *Thy loving kindneſs is better then life*, ſaith *David*, Pſal.63.3. *Life* is the *coupler* and *cement* of all our earthly portions; *all* is gone, if *life* be gone: it is the love of God that *ſweetens* that. The greateſt portion in the world muſt needs be uncomfortable without this. For a man to have *enlarged* and *full barns*, and with all to have an angry God ſummoning him with a *Stulte hâc nocte*, how terrible is it and uncomfortable? Yet this is the caſe of all thoſe who have their portions onely in this life.

III. Becauſe he enjoys it without intereſt in Chriſt: through whom onely it is that our earthly portions become true *comforts* and *real bleſſings*, *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things*, Rom.8.32. Then they are bleſſings indeed, when they are given us together with Chriſt; and thus Chriſtians enjoy their earthly portions, as appurtenances to Chriſt, as entails upon the Covenant, as προσθημα, or ὀπαδον, as an *acceſſion* or *over-plus*, as *Grotius* comments on *Matth*, 6.33 προστεθησεται ὑμῖν, to *you*, who ſeek *firſt the kingdom of heaven*, who have an intereſt in Chriſt. How uncomfortable is it to enjoy a portion here, without a part and portion in Chriſt? look, as intereſt in Chriſt ſweetens the worſt croſſes and afflictions of a Chriſtian, (Chriſt being as the *tree* was to the *waters* of *Marah*, Exod. 15.25. he removes the *bitterneſs* of afflictions; or as the *honey* in the belly of the *lyon*, Judges 14. *ſweetning* the moſt devouring affliction): ſo the greateſt portion of the world without Chriſt is a real curſe to a wicked man, who (I do not ſay they have no juſt right or title to their portions here: for to found Dominion in grace, is to leave the world to very uncertain *Owners*, and is the principle of oppreſſion and confuſion) enjoys no portion in a comfortable manner. Chriſt is the conveyance even of temporal bleſſings, when enjoy'd in a ſanctified manner, *All things are yours, and you are Chriſts*, with the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21, 23. And, truely, to enjoy all things without Chriſt, is nothing; it is to enjoy the *huſk* without the *grain*; the *ſhell* without the *kernel*; the *bone*

without the *marrow*; the *caſket* without the *jewel*; the *field* without the *pearl*; and thus do all wicked men enjoy their portions in this life, who, as the Apoſtle deſcribes them, are *without God and Chriſt in the world*, Eph. 2. 12.

IV. Becauſe he enjoys no *true real comfort* in his portion in this life. Some counterfeit contentment, and ſeeming forced joy and delight he may have in his earthly enjoyments: but we may truely ſay, as *Solomon* doth, *Eccleſ.* 2. 2. *What doth it?* it profits nothing; this comfort is neither true, nor laſting.

And that,

1. Becauſe of the *mixture* of ſome *croſſes*, and many *cares*, which wound and peirce the ſoul *through with many ſorrows*, as the Apoſtle aſſures us, 1 *Tim.* 6. 10. *Vexation of ſpirit* is entail'd inſeparably upon this earthly portion: *Vexation* in the procuring of it, *Eccleſ.* 2. 22, 23. What diſquieting *plottings* and *contrivances* to get this portion? and when he hath it, how diſquieted is he, & diſtracted, and divided between *care* to keep, and enlarge it, and *fear* to looſe it? beſides, how oft doth ſome outward croſs embitter his portion. As the Saints in their greateſt afflictions have their *lucida intervalla*, comfortable refreſhings, intervals of joy and comfort, (*Prov.* 10. 22. *The bleſſing of the Lord it maketh rich, and he addeth no ſorrow with it*): So he that enjoys the moſt full portion in this life, meets oft with that croſs, which robs him of the comfort of his enjoyments; as the *rich man's* ſummons, *Luke* 12. dampt his joy in his *full barns*.

2. Becauſe of the *ſting of conſcience*: which if once awakened, gnaws, and ſecretly eats out all the comfort of his earthly portion, whoſe ſecret ſuggeſtions and whiſperings in the fulleſt enjoyments, oft ſurprizeth, and fills the ſoul with ſadneſs and horrour. The *hand-writing* againſt *Belſhazzar* makes him *tremble* amidſt all his *carouzes* in *the cups of the Temple*, Dan. 5. 5, 6. *Judas* threw away the *thirtie pieces*, Matth. 27. 5. no comfort in them when ſummoned to the *tribunal* of conſcience as guiltie of the bloud of Chriſt. *Multos fortuna liberat pœnâ, metu neminem*, ſaith *Seneca*. What *Tacitus* ſaith of *Tyrants*, is true of all wicked men, *Si recludantur mentes, poſſe aſpici laniatus & ictus*. Though God reprieves wicked men from preſent execution, yet they are oft diſquieted with inward fear: this *vultur* at the heart preys upon their inward comfort, and thus *in the midſt of laughter the heart is ſorrowfull*, Prov. 14. 13. and the greateſt portion in the world is no more ſolace or comfort, then a velvet ſlipper to a goutie foot, or a crown to an aking head.

Sentc. ep. 98.
Tacit. Annal. lib. 6.

3. Becauſe of the *ſecret curſe of God*, which is entailed upon a wicked

wicked mans portion in this life; what ever he enjoys he hath the *curſe of God* going along with it; hath he a fair eſtate? that is a curſe to him, *Deut.* 28.17,18. *Curſed ſhall be thy basket and thy ſtore. Curſed ſhall be the fruit of thy land, the encreaſe of thy kine, and the flocks of thy ſheeep.* Hath he plentifull and delicious fare and proviſion? this is accurſed too, *Job* 20.23. *When he is about to fill his belly, God ſhall caſt the furie of his wrath upon him, and ſhall rain it upon him while he is eating.* This curſe appears ſometime in the inſenſible waſting, and decay of his portion; that the rich worldling puts money into a bagge with *holes*, Hagg. 1.6. and it runs out he knows not how: ſometimes by blaſting their comfort in them, ſtopping them in their moſt eager carrier, and hotteſt purſuit of the world; and when they have riches, they have no heart to uſe them, which *Solomon* takes notice of as the greateſt vanity of the world, *Eccleſ.* 6.2. *It is the bleſſing of the Lord that maketh rich*, Prov. 10.22. From this it was that *Daniel's* countenance, after ten daies living with *pulſe and water*, look't *fairer and fatter*, then thoſe who eat the portion of *the kings meat*, Dan. 1.15. So on the contrarie it is the ſecret *curſe of God* which blaſts a wicked mans portion in the world; we read *Levit.* 16. of *two goats*, the *goat for the ſin-offering*, and *the ſcape-goat*; the firſt ſacrificed to God, the other diſmiſſed into *the wilderneſs* with all the ſins and curſes of the children of Iſrael upon his head: *Origen*, after his uſual manner, allegorizing on that place, makes theſe *two goates* repreſentations of *good and wicked men*: the godly, being oft *ſors Domini*, are *martyred and perſecuted*, but by it they are made *an acceptable ſacrifice to God*; the wicked (*qui ſunt de hoc mundo*) *the men of the world*, are ſet at libertie, have their freedom, and enjoy enlargement *in the wilderneſs of the world*, but laded with their own ſins, and the curſes of God upon their heads. And how miſerable is this for the Iſraelites *to have Quails*, and the *wrath of God* overtaking them, while they were eating them? *Numb.* 11.32. for men to have their tables richly ſpread with dainties, and that *table to become a ſnare to them*, muſt needs be miſerable: and yet thus it is with all thoſe who have their portions onely in this life.

Orig. Hom. 9.

Pſal. 69.22.

V. Becauſe he enjoys it to his *real hurt and miſchief*. It was that ſore evil which *Solomon* obſerved *under the ſun*, that *riches were kept for the owners thereof to their hurt*, Eccleſ. 5.13. *Periculoſiſsima eſt felicitatis intemperantia*, ſaith *Seneca*. *Dives eſt aliquis malus? habet ſibi in curam, angorem, ruinam*, ſaith the ſame Authour. Wealth is the worldlings vexation here, and ruine hereafter.

A wicked mans portion in the world tends to his miſchief four waies.

1. *As it eſtranges him from God.* We read of the Prodigal, *Luke* 15. that when he had got his portion, he ran away from his father into a *far countrie*, and ſpent it in *riotous living*, v. 12,13. ſo doth the portion of wicked men here ſet them at a diſtance, and enmitie to God; and truely nothing ſooner alienates mens ſouls from God and goodneſs, then a great portion in the world. The devil offered this as a ſuitable temptation to prevail with Chriſt himſelf, *Matth.* 4.9. *All theſe things*, &c. He hath kept this as his reſerve, as his laſt temptation; if this will not do, he knew his other aſſaults would be to little purpoſe. It was a ſeaſonable admonition which *Moſes* gave to Iſrael, *Deut.* 8.10,11, *When thou haſt eaten, and art full, then thou ſhalt bleſs the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee*, &c. there was great danger that the milk and honey of *Canaan* might make them forget God, and again, *Deut* 6.12. *Beware, leſt thou forget the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the houſe of bondage.* And this is none of the leaſt miſchiefs of that portion wicked men have in this life.

2. *As it betraies them, and laies them open to abundance of ſin:* their worldly abundance is but *fewel* to their *luſt*, *exalts them in pride*, as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *Pſal.* 73. 5,6. As *Alexander's* victories cauſed him to ſubſcribe himſelf, *The ſon of Jupiter*; it heightens them into contempt and forgetfulneſs of God, *According to their paſture, ſo were they filled: they were filled, and their heart was exalted: therefore have they forgotten me*, Hoſea 13.6. It oft makes them more hardned at heart, and reſolved in ſin; & with *Pharaoh* to ſay, *Who is the Lord that I ſhould obey him?* Exod.5.2. It makes them unfruitfull under the means of grace, as *Luke* 8. 14. *the ſeed that fell among thorns* is expounded of them that are *choaked* with *cares, and riches, and pleaſures of this life.* It betraies them to idleneſs, as you may ſee it did *Sodom*, Ezek. 16.49. Common experience tells us that is the mother, and nurſe of all impietie; God knowing this, oft (as a wiſe Phyſitian opens a vein to prevent a diſeaſe) cuts ſhort his own people as to their portion in this world, lets them bloud in their eſtates and honours, to prevent in them thoſe ſins, which the wicked mans abundance ſolicites and betrays him to.

3. *As it imbitters every affliction, and makes death more terrible.* O death! how bitter is the remembrance of thee, to a man that lives at reſt in his poſſeſſions? to a man that hath nothing to vex him, & hath proſperitie in all things? *O death, acceptable is thy ſentence to the needy*, Eccleſiaſticus 4.1,2. which place though I dare not adopt into Scripture, yet I dare take it for a certain truth. *Affliction* diſquiers

quiets him, and *death* terrifies him; he is building *Tabernacles* here, and enlarging his barns, and hugging his preſent enjoyments in this life, *quam ſolùm ſuam vitam putant, qui æternam deſperant*, ſaith *Auguſtine* upon my Text. And, truely, they muſt needs tremble to part with their portion in this life, who deſpair of getting any portion in another.

4. *As it encreaſeth his wo, and undoes his ſoul to eternitie. The proſperitie of fools ſhall deſtroy them*, ſaith the *Wiſe-man*, Prov. 1.32. The abuſe of his *earthly portion* will render him the more inexcuſable at the laſt day: and how ſad is it to *treaſure up the world*, and *wrath* together? As it is comfortable for Chriſtians to conſider that all their afflictions here will encreaſe their future glory, when every tear they have here wept ſhall turn into a pearl to beautifie and enrich their crown: ſo it is miſerable to think how the wicked mans preſent proſperitie ſhall afterward encreaſe his miſery. That's a terrible place, *Revel.* 18. 7. *How much ſhe hath glorified her ſelf, and lived deliciouſly, ſo much torment and ſorrow give her:* the very remembrance of which will be part of hell to him. How will that ſtrike him to the very heart, *Luke* 16. 25. *Son, remember that thou in thy life time receiveds't thy good things*, &c? and that's the laſt account I ſhall give you of this mans miſerie, who hath his portion onely here. Rom. 2. 4.

VI. Conſider *the miſerable portion ſuch a man ſhall have in another life* which Scripture acquaints us with, *Pſal.* 11. 6. *Upon the wicked he ſhall rain ſnares, fire and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt: this ſhall be the portion of their cup*: and 'tis *parabolically* expreſſed in *Mat.* 24. 51. *He ſhall be cut aſunder, & his portion appointed him*, &c. then ſhall he wiſh he had gone without a portion in this world; then ſhall many an unjuſt *Ahab* curſe the day that ever he had any thing to do with a *Naboth's vine-yard*. Then ſhall many an *Ananias* & *Sapphira* curſe the day in which they enriched themſelves by *Sacrilege*; when thoſe hands ſhall burn in eternal flames, which here fingred that fewel which ſhould have kept the fire alive upon the Altar. Then ſhall an unjuſt *Felix* curſe his bribes, and oppreſſours their extortion, covetous worldlings their uſurie, and cunning Merchants their gains, their cheats and over-reaches in trading. And, how miſerable do you conceive their caſe to be? when many a *Dives*, who here is arrayed in purple and ſilk, ſhall there lye down clothed and enwrapped in flames: when many who here inhabit the ſtatelieſt palaces, ſhall there dwell with *everlaſting burnings*, Iſa. 33. 14. when many who here fare deliciouſly every day, ſhall then with *Dives* call for, and that in vain too, *a drop of cold water*, Luke 16. 24. when many who here *chaunt to the ſound of the viol*,

viol, as in *Amos* 6. 5. that *take the timbrel, and the harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ*, as *Job* deſcribes them (*chap.*21.12.) ſhall have no other muſick, but the weepings and howlings, and *gnaſhing of teeth* of damned wretches. This miſerable portion of wicked men is that which Scripture oft ſuggeſts to us, as the account of God's providence in dealing them out a portion of the world here, and as a means of conquering all diſtruſtfull repinings: to this *Job* refers us, chap. 21. 30. *The wicked is reſerved to the day of deſtruction: they ſhall be brought forth to the day of wrath:* and *David Pſal.*37.35,36. *I have ſeen the wicked in great power, and ſpreading himſelf like a green bay-tree: yet he paſſed away, and lo, he was not: yea, I ſought him, but he could not be found.* *David* overcame his temptation, when he went into the *Sanctuary*, and underſtood the end of theſe men, *Pſal.* 73. 17. that God had ſet them in *ſlipperie places*, and ſo being the higher, they were in danger of the greater fall, *verſe* 18, 19. and that their preſent happineſs was but as a dream, *verſe* 20. ſhort and deceitfull. Give me leave to allude to that place, *Geneſ.* 48. 13, 14. when *Jacob* was to bleſs *Joſephs* ſons, *Joſeph* ſet *Ephraim* on his *left* hand, and *Manaſſeh* on the *right*; but *Jacob* on the contrary laid his *right* hand on *Ephraim*, and his *left* on *Manaſſeh*: many who are here ſet on the *right* hand of the *world*, enriched with the greateſt bleſſings it can afford, ſhall at the laſt day be ſet on Gods *left* hand, and be diſpatched with that ſentence; *Go ye curſed*, Matth. 25. 41. and thoſe whom the world ſets on her *left*, as ſcorned and contemned, ſhall be found amongſt thoſe on Gods *right* hand, who ſhall receive the *bleſſing*, and the *kingdome of their Father*, verſ. 34. I hope this is ſufficient to clear up the *providence* of God, and to demonſtrate the *miſerie* of wicked men, having onely a portion in this life. I beg leave to illuſtrate all with a relation out of profound *Bradwardine*, and ſo I ſhall conclude this *doctrinal* part. The relation is of a certain *Hermite*, who was tempted to *blaſphemy*, as conceiving the *judgements* of God *unjuſt*, in that he ſaw the *wicked proſper*, and the *righteous afflicted*: in which diſtruſt there appeared an Angel ſent from God to him in the ſhape of a man, beſpeaking him thus, *Follow me* (ſaith he) *and thou ſhalt ſee the hidden judgements of God:* whom the Hermite obeying followed to the houſe of a very religious man, who received them with much courteſie all night, they departing the next morning the Angel took away a cup which the good man much affected, and gave it to a very wicked man, with whom they lodged the next night; the third night they were received by a very godly man, whoſe ſervant the Angel in the morning drowned in the well; the fourth night being entertained courteouſly by a very religious hoſt,

*Bradw. l.*1.*c.* 31.

hoſt, the Angel ſlew his childe, at which the Hermite much wondring deſired to depart, the Angel told him he *was ſent from heaven to diſcover to him the hidden myſteries of providence: I took away the cup from the firſt man, becauſe his affections were too much ſet upon it, I gave it to the wicked man* ut mercedem ſuam recipiat in præſenti, *that he might have his reward here in this life; I drowned the ſervant of the third hoſt, becauſe he had it in his heart to kill his maſter; ſo I preſerved the godly man from death, and the ungodly man from committing that ſin, by which means he is leſs puniſhed in hell; I ſlew the fourth mans childe, becauſe before he had a childe, he gave many alms, therefore I took away the childe, and carried that into heaven, and ſo removed the occaſion of the good mans covetouſneſs.* I hope the reverence of the Authour from whom I borrowed it, & the congruitie of it to my preſent ſubject will be ſufficient Apologie for the length of this relation: it acquaints us with the end and deſign of God's providences; he ſometimes cuts his own people ſhort in the world to prevent their ſin, to cure their corruption, to alienate their affections from the world, and oft gives to the worſt of men, that they may have their reward, their portion onely in this life.

Application.

Have the wicked oft a portion in the world? then,

Firſt, Take hence an aſſurance of a *future judgement*. Wicked men have their portion here: but the juſtice of God permits not that it ſhould be always well with them; his *goodneſs* here lays them out a *portion*, but his *juſtice* will lay them out hereafter a *puniſhment*: I have Commiſſion to aſſure the righteous it ſhall be *well* with them, how-ever they *fare* here, Iſa. 3. 10. and to ſpeak a *woe* to the wicked, for it ſhall be *ill* with him, how *proſperous* ſoever his *condition* be here: *For the reward of his hands ſhall be given him*, ver. 11. God *hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs*, Acts 17. 31. not then to correct the *obliquities* of his preſent providential proceedings (for Gods will being the *firſt rule* and *adequate meaſure* of *rectitude*, his way muſt be *juſt*, when moſt *ſecret*) but to clear up the *equitie* of them to the world, to vindicate them from that challenge and imputation of *injuſtice*, which the ignorance, infirmity, or malice of men might here lay upon them, then all thoſe *myſterious providences*, which men are apt here to quarrel with, and cenſure as not *juſt* and *equal*, ſhall be unveiled and diſcovered: therefore the Apoſtle calls it ἡμέρα ἀποκαλύψεως, *Rom.* 2. 5. *The day of the revelation of the righteous judgement of God:* then as the Prophet *Malachy* ſaith, *chap.* 3. 18 we ſhall clearly *diſcern between the wicked and the righteous*; though here oft through the promiſcuous, myſterious

myſterious diſpenſations of God, we cannot difference him that *ſerveth* God, and him that *ſerveth* him not.

Secondly, Let Chriſtians learn hence *to live by faith*. This is one end of Gods dealing out a *large portion* of the *world* to wicked men, while his own people are *in want* and *afflicted*, to teach them to wait by faith and in dependance upon God for that portion he hath treaſured up for them in heaven. God ſuffers the *bricks* to be *doubled* in *Egypt*, that ſo his people might the more *long* for, and by faith *live* upon the promiſe of *Canaan*. A Maſter or Lord pays his *ſlave* his preſent *wages*, while he cuts his ſon *ſhort* in his *allowance* during his *non-age*, that he may learn to depend upon his father for the inheritance. Thus doth God, the great Lord of all, deal with his *ſlaves*, who ſerve him for the *hire* of ſome *temporal* advantage, he gives them their *preſent reward*, and *wages*; but though his goodneſs hath determined a better portion to be a reward to the *pietie* and *obedience* of his *children*; yet he gives it them *in reverſion*, little *in hand*, that they may learn to live upon the *promiſe*, and by faith to depend on the *goodneſs* and *faithfulneſs* of their Father for their heavenly inheritance; that they walking not by *ſight*, but *faith* (which is a Chriſtians work and condition here) may not *look at the things which are ſeen, &c*, 2 Cor. 4. 18.

Thirdly, *Envy not wicked men their portion*. This is *Davids* inference, Pſal. 37. 1. *Fret not thy ſelf becauſe of evil doers, neither be thou envious againſt the workers of iniquity: for they ſhall ſoon be cut down like the graſs, and wither as the green herb*: and more fully, Pſal. 49. 16, 17. *Be not thou afraid when one is made rich; when the glory of his houſe is encreaſed: for, when he dieth he ſhall carry nothing away; his glory ſhall not deſcend after him*: thou ſhalt go out of the world as rich as he, and much more happy: and verſ. 18. *Though whiles he lived, he bleſſed his ſoul: and men will praiſe thee when thou doeſt well to thy ſelf*: hee'l have little reaſon to boaſt of it in another life; it is but a *fools paradiſe* he is in here, and *falſa felicitas ipſa eſt major infelicitas*, ſaith *Auſtin*. His conceived happineſs *uſhers* in his greater miſerie. I would envy that man no more, then I would a *reprieved malefactour*, whom I ſee gratifying his *palate* with the moſt *delicious fare*, or having his way to the *gibbet* ſtrewed with *roſes*, who merits *pitie*, not *envy*.

Auguſt. in Pſal. 30. 1.

Fourthly, This ſhould teach Chriſtians *contentedneſs with whatever allowance they have in the world*; it is a *wicked mans portion*, a *Chriſtians viaticum*, S. *Paul* had learnt this leſſon thoroughly, *Phil.* 4. 11, 12. *I have learned in whatſoever ſtate I am, therewith to be content*. And, truely, Chriſtians have all the reaſon in the world to learn *contentation*; while, though others have the

many

many things of the world, thou, with *Mary*, haſt the *better part*; though *poor* in the *world*, yet *rich* in *faith*, therefore *heir* of a kingdome, *Jam.* 2. 5. That, though accounted περίψημα, the *off-ſcouring* of the world, yet one of Gods *jewels*, *Malach.* 3. 17. If thou haſt *none*, or a *ſmall* portion in the world, yet if thou canſt ſay, *The Lord is my portion*, with *David*, thou haſt reaſon to be ſatisfied. *Seneca* brings in God anſwering the *diſcontents* of *vertuous* men thus, *Illis bona falſa circundedi, & animos inanes velut longo fallacique ſomno luſi: I have given them* (meaning vitious men) *theſe counterfeit good things, and they lie in a deceitful ſhort dream of worldly happineſs; auro illos, argento, & ebore ornavi, intus nihil boni eſt; they are outwardly adorned, but inwardly defiled, and abominable; at vobis dedi bona certa & manſura; but you have the true and permanent good; non egere felicitate felicitas veſtra eſt; it is your happineſs that you ſtand not in need of theſe worldly things to make you ſo.* Check then (*O Chriſtian*) the riſing *diſcontents* of thy ſoul from the want of the world, as *Elkanah* did the repinings of *Hannah* for her want of children, 1 *Sam.* 1. 8. Is not thy *portion in God* better to thee (*O Chriſtian*) then *ten*, then a *thouſand portions in the world:* thou maiſt ſay as *David* did, Pſal. 16. 6. *The lines are fallen to me in pleaſant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.* *Seneca pag.* 389.

Fifthly, Hence, *Chriſtians*, learn *ſubmiſſion under the loſſes, and patience under the croſſes* of this world. *Juſtis quidquid malorum ab iniquis dominis irrogatur, non eſt pana criminis, ſed virtutis examen*, ſaith *Auſtin: omnia mala exercitationes putat. Croſſes* are but *tryals of his patience* and *conſtancy*. 'Tis no wonder to ſee wicked men repining and deſponding at the loſs of *earthly things*, they are their *portion*, they look for no other; but Chriſtians ſhould learn *patience* and *ſubmiſſion*, as the deportment which is moſt ſuitable to their hopes of a portion in *another life: Every man that ſtriveth for the maſterie is temperate in all things: now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible*, Rom. 9. 25. Upon this future portion when *Moſes* had fixt his eye of faith, he choſe *afflictions*, ſcornes the *profits*, and diſrelliſht the *pleaſures* of the world; as you may read in *Hebr.* 11. 25, 26, 27. ἀπέβλεπε εἰς τὴν μισθαποδοσίαν, *he had reſpect to the recompence of reward:* and *David* here comforts himſelf with this, ver. 15. *As for me I will behold thy face in righteouſneſs*, &c. *Aug. lib.* 4. *cap.* 3. *de Civ. Dei.* 1. Cor

Sixthly, This regulates our judgements concerning *true happineſs*: we are very apt to miſtake here. As *Samuel* viewing the *beautie* and *ſtature* of *Eliab*, would have him *annointed* and the *crown* ſet on his head; when yet God had deſign'd the kingdome for little deſpiſed *David* at the *ſheep-fold*: thus are men apt to ſet the *crown* of happineſs on thoſe, who are moſt *enriched*, and highlyeſt *honoured* 1 Sam. 16. 6, 12.

red in the world, and think thoſe the onely happy men: when yet in truth, if wicked men, they are moſt miſerable, as having their portion onely in *this life*. Therefore *David* ſeems to correct his judgement of happineſs, Pſal. 144. 15. *Happy is that people whoſe God is the Lord.*

Seventhly, This may inſtruct our *charity*, and teach us to do *good* to our very enemies: it is but to write after Gods own *copy*, who oft gives the worſt of his enemies a *portion* and *Almes* here: and our Saviour urgeth this as a *motive* and *incentive* to our charitie, and a *pattern* for our imitation, Matthew 5. 44, 45. *I ſay unto you love your enemies*, &c. *that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven:* for יהי, *children*, is read in ſome copies כהוי, *like*, as *Grotius* obſerves; which intimates Gods *univerſal goodneſs* diſplayed in his *general providence*, as a *pattern* and *rule* for our charity even to our enemies.

Eighthly, This diſcovers that *rotten foundation*, upon which many men build their *hopes* of heaven. *Surely* (are many ready to argue) *if God did not love me, he would not give me ſuch a portion in the world:* deceive not thy ſelf in a matter of ſo great concernment, Thou maiſt as well ſay *God loved Judas, becauſe he had the bags*, or *Dives becauſe he fared deliciouſly*, who is now roaring in hell. No, theſe earthly things are but the *crumbs*, which God doth oft caſt to the *dogs*, as *Luther* ſaith the whole *Turkiſh Empire* is no more; the *huſks* which the *ſwine* feed on: take the judgement of the wiſeſt of men, *Solomon*, and you'l ſee the rottenneſs of this foundation, *Eccles. 9. 1. no man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before them.*

Ninthly, Let this awaken us all to a *ſerious tryall* and *examination* of our ſelves this day, whether we be of the number of thoſe who have their portion onely in *this life:* the greateſt part of the world are of this ſort. But you'l ſay, *Indeed this is worth enquiry into, but how ſhall a man diſcern and know this.* I anſwer; If you examine theſe three things.

I. How cam'ſt thou by that portion in the world which thou haſt? or, How haſt thou encreaſed it? Art thou exalted upon the *ruins* of others? Have thy *advancements* in the Church come in by *Simonie?* or is thy *eſtate* encreaſed by *fraud oppreſſion*, and *grinding the faces of the poor*, by *rapine, extortion, cheats*, and *over-reaching in thy trading?* haſt thou poſſeſt a *Naboth's vineyard* by violence? I muſt take the boldneſs to ſay as *Nathan* to *David*; *Thou art the man:* without *repentance* and *reſtitution*, (and truly the firſt will be but counterfeit and hypocritical without the other; we read *Zaccheus*, Luke 19. reſtored *four-fold*) thou art the man that haſt thy portion onely *in this life. O my ſoul come not thou into their ſecret,*

Gen. 49. 6.

who

who by *injuſtice* and *deceit* hoard up a portion in *this life*, with the loſs and forfeiture of their *eternal inheritance:* and thus it is Jer. 17. 11. *As the partridge ſitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not: ſo he that getteth riches, and not by right, ſhall leave them in the midſt of his days, and at his end ſhall be a fool.*

II. *Examine thy affections.* After what doth the violence of thy *deſires* run? upon what is thy *delight* fixt? what *ſads* and *diſquiets* thy ſoul moſt at the loſs of it? what-ever that is *that* is thy portion. It is a ſtanding rule of triall, which our Saviour lays down, Matth. 6. 21. *Where your treaſure is, there will your hearts be alſo.* Mens hearts and affections will diſcover what's their portion. God was *Davids* portion, *Pſal.* 119. 57. how did *David* diſcover this? by his *longing* and *breathing after him,* Pſal. 42. 1. above what ever was either in *heaven* or *earth*, Pſal. 73. 25. by his *delight* and *rejoycing in him*; all the encreaſe of *corn* and *wine*, and *oyl* could not fill *Davids* ſoul with ſo much gladneſs, as one *glimpſe of the light of Gods countenance*, Pſal. 4. 7. and nothing filled his ſoul with ſo much ſorrow, as the *loſs* and *with-drawings* of God, Pſal. 42. 4. and, *Hath God forgotten to be gracious, and ſhut up his loving kindneſs in diſpleaſure?* Pſal. 77. 7, 8, 9. But now you ſhall ſee quite contrary affections in that worldling, *Luke* 12. 18, 19. his plottings are how to *enlarge his barns*, his ſouls *requiem*, *joy*, and *delight* is taken up in theſe *worldly enjoyments*. *Ahab* is *diſpleaſed* and *ſad*, if he cannot have *Naboths vineyard*, 1 *Kings* 21. 4. *Haman* is *enraged* for want of *Mordecai's* bowed knee, *Eſther* 3. 5. *Portio cujusque dicitur, in quo felicitatem ſuam quisque locat*, ſaith *Calvin:* and do not moſt mens *carking-care* for the *procuring* innordinate delight in the enjoying, *diſtruſtfull fear* of *looſing*, and *repining ſorrows* for *parting* with the world, ſpeak that it is their *portion*, and their *happineſs*?

III. What *uſe* and *improvement* do you make of your *earthly enjoyments?* are they *cords of love* to God? *engagements to obedience*? *encouragements* and *enablements* to do God more ſervice? Doeſt thou rejoyce in them as giving *opportunities* to do more good to others? Canſt thou ſay they are *arguments* and *motives* with thee to walk *chearfully* with God? They are thy *viaticum* to a better inheritance; but if thou uſeſt, or rather abuſeſt, thy *riches* to *luxurie* and *riot*, thy *power* to *tyranny* and *oppreſsion*, thy *beauty* as a *bait* to *uncleanneſs*, thy *learning* in patronage of *errour* and oppoſing the truths of God? If thy *worldly enjoyments* draws thee from thy *obedience* to God; as *fat paſtures* make beaſts more *unruly*? If with *Jeſhurun*, *Deut.* 32. 15. thou *waxeſt fat*, and *kickeſt* againſt God; ſadly think of it, without repentance thou art the man, who haſt thy portion onely in *this life*. The ſum then is, whoever *gets* his earthly portion

on *unjuſtly*, *affects* it *inordinately*, *uſeth* it *unfruitfully* and *ungodlily*, he is the man, whoſe miſery it is to have his portion in *this life*.

Tenthly, *Chriſtians*, *prize your portion*. Though you have little or no portion in the world, there is an excellency in a Chriſtians portion above what is to be found in the largeſt portions of the world, which wicked men enjoy.

Eleventhly, Let us all ſeriouſly ſet upon it this day, to *treaſure up a portion to our ſelves in another life*: to take our Saviours advice, Matth. 6. 20. to *lay up for our ſelves treaſures in heaven*. To you eſpecially I ſpeak, who have the largeſt portion in this world: none ſo apt to neglect the thoughts and care of heaven, as thoſe who have moſt upon earth, as being immers'd in *worldly pleaſures*, and on every hand beſet with *temptations to ſin*, and *ſolicitations* to *forget God*. *Luther* was wont to reſolve, *ſe nolle ſic ſatiari*, that *God ſhould not put him off with an earthly portion*. That you may get a portion hereafter, take theſe directions.

Firſt, *Make it your firſt and chief buſineſs to lay up a portion in heaven*. 'Tis the moſt compendious way to get a portion in the world, Matth. 6. 33. *Seek ye firſt the kingdome of God, and his righteouſneſs*; You will be every way gainers by it even in this life; *for all theſe things ſhall be added unto you*, caſt in as an *addition* and *over-plus*, (*Solomon* had *riches* and *honour* caſt in as an *additional over-plus* to that *wiſdome* he asked of God) or elſe the *ſanctified uſe* of thy little portion in this life, and, as in *Prov.* 15. 16, *Better is little with the fear of the Lord, then great treaſure and trouble therewith*: and *Prov.* 16. 19. *Better it is to be of an humble ſpirit with the lowly, then to divide the ſpoil with the proud*. Thou ſhalt have the world ſo far as it is good for thee, and that little thou haſt ſhall be filled up with the *bleſſings* of God *here*; and in the *other life* too: *Godlineſs* hath the promiſe of both: 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. *Godlineſs is profitable unto all things, having promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*: of the one *abſolutely*, and the other *conditionally*.

Secondly, *Live ſuitably to the nature and expectations of a portion in another life*, that is, *holily*: *without this holineſs no man ſhall ever ſee the face of God*, Hebr. 12. 14. and that's the portion of *Saints* hereafter, as appears verſ. 15. after my Text, *David* oppoſing this to that portion the men of the world have in this life.

Thirdly, *Get a portion of grace here treaſured up in your hearts*: Pſal. 84. 11. *The Lord God is a ſun and ſhield, the Lord will give grace and glorie*: not one without the other, all the *glory* in the world without *grace* will not entitle us to *glory* hereafter: Let us then labour to make ſure of God as our *portion* in *this life*, that in *another life* he may be our *exceeding great reward*.

FINIS.

SALVATION
BY
CHRIST
The Summe of the
GOSPEL.

A Sermon preached in S. *Benedict's* Church in *Cambridge*, May 27. 1655.

By JOHN FROST, *B. D.* then Fellow of S. *JOHNS* Colledge, and late Preacher in *Olaves-Hartſtreet* in *London.*

Luke 19. 10.
The Son of man is come to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt.
Nulla cauſa veniendi Chriſto Domino, niſi peccatores ſalvos facere: Tolle morbos, & tolle vulnera, & nulla erit cauſa medicinæ.
Auguſt. ſerm. 9. de verb. Apon.

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1 Tim. 1. 15.

This is a faithfull saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

NOne can set an *higher estimate* and *value* upon *mercie*, then those who have the *deepest sence* of their own *sin* and *misery*. Christ is more *pretious* to none, then to souls who have been *truely humbled* for sin. The revelation of *Gospel-grace* is not so acceptable to any, as to those who see themselves *condemned* by the Law. Thus S. *Paul* here reflecting upon his former *sins*, ver. 13. how doth he exalt the *mercy* of God, and the *grace* of Christ, ver. 14. ὑπερεπλεόνασε, as if he wanted expression? and that *Gospel-doctrine*, That *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners* (*of which* he now saw himself to be the *chief*) which the Jews *scoffe at*, the Greek *counts foolishness*, the Atheist *derides*, the Pharisaical Justiciarie *undervalues*, to him is πιστὸς λόγος and πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος, *the most acceptable message*, &c. Which words in their relative consideration seem to refer to ver. 12. as a *vindication* of his Apostleship and Ministry from that *prejudice* and *calumnie* of those, who objected his *former persecution* and *blasphemie* to him, as a charge upon his *present Ministrie*. The Apostle first acknowledgeth the charge, ver. 13. and secondly, he asserts both *right* to, and *abilities* for the Ministry to be from God, ver. 12. and thirdly, he lays down the *reason* of Gods dealing thus with him, ver. 13, 14. and lest perhaps some might think this false, or impossible; 1. he demonstrates the *truth* of his conversion by the *fruits* and *effects* of it, *Faith*, and *Love*, ver. 14. and, 2. the *possibility* of it from the general end of Christs coming into the world, which was *to save sinners*, ἁμαρτωλοὺς, which word signifies *notorious*, *infamous sinners*; that's in the Text, *This is a faithfull saying*, &c. That's the coherence of the words, in which observe three things;

First, A *preface*, πιστὸς ὁ λόγος, καὶ πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος, *This is a faithfull saying, and worthy of all acceptation.*

Secondly, A *Doctrine* or *proposition*, Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς ἦλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἁμαρτωλοὺς σῶσαι, *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.*

Thirdly, The *proof* of the *proposition* by a Particular accommodation

dation to himself, ὧν πρῶτός εἰμι ἐγώ, *of whom I am chief.* And his *example* was, as he tells you; ver. 16. a *pattern* of that *mercy*, which God through Christ would manifest to other sinners.

In the *Preface* four things are held forth.

I. The *truth* and *certainty* of the Gospel. Πιστὸς ὁ λόγος, which is the same with βέβαιος or, ἀληθής: an expression much used by the Apostle, *quoties aliquid magni momenti adfert, cui fidem adstruendam putat*, as *Heinsius* observes. The Apostle useth it here, to secure Christians from those doubts which their own *hearts*, or *false Apostles*, or *justiciaries*, or *legalists* might object against the *certainty* of mans salvation by Christ. *Is dignus, cui fides habeatur ut qui fallere non potest*, saies *Beza*.

II. The *worth* and *excellency* of Gospel-revelation. *That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners* is πιστὸς ὁ λόγος, καὶ πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος, *a faithfull saying, and worthy of all acceptation.* Πιστὸς ὁ λόγος *Sermonem non quemvis, sed eximium, & selectum declarat*, saith *Beza*; a *choice truth* the *summe* and *substance* of the Gospel.

III. That *esteem*, and *entertainment*, which the Gospel deservedly calls for from Christians. It is not onely Πιστὸς λόγος, that is, *non tantùm sententia vera, sed digna quæ fiat plurimi*, saith *Grotius*: *not onely a true sentence, but most worthy also of our highest esteem and valuation*: and not onely so but ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος *worthy* of our *acceptation* too. Ἀποδέχομαι is *aliquid avidè arripere*, saith *Musculus*; as a *poor man* will *money*, or a *hungry man* his *meat*. Nay further, the Apostle, by all meanes endeavouring to provoke us to an entertainment of the Gospel, said it is πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος, *ut nihil relinquat quòd sit avidius acceptandum quàm Evangelium Dei de peccatorum allata salute per Christum*, saith *Musculus* on the place. So that imagine the greatest, and most readie entertainment any thing in the world meets with from *carnal* hearts, *gold* to the *covetous*, &c. the Gospel deserves a more ready welcome from Christians, as being πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος, *worthy of all acceptation*.

IIII. A *Paradox* to reason; *& ideo Apostolus seriâ illâ obtestatione utitur*, saith *Gerard*. *Gerard. in loc.*

Secondly, In the *proposition* observe.

I. The *person who came*, Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς, Jesus Christ, the *eternal* son of God.

II. The *place whither*, εἰς τὸν κόσμον, into the world, a *vally* of *tears*, a *stage* of *misery*.

III. To *what end*, or *wherefore*, he came, σῶσαι, to *save*. *For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world: but that the world through him might be saved*, Joh. 3. 17.

IV. The *persons whom he came for*, ἁμαρτωλοὺς, *sinners*; and those not

not *Angels*, but *men*, &c. Each word heightens the mercy of Chriſt, and ſhould provoke us to an effectual entertainment of that Goſpel which reveales Chriſts *coming into the world to ſave ſinners.* Not Men good and righteous in themselves, but sinners.

I ſhall ſumme up theſe into this Doctrine,

The Goſpel (of which this is the ſumme, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners) is a moſt certain truth, and moſt acceptable doctrine. Doctrine. In proſecution of which I ſhall endeavour to ſhew,

First, That the *promiſed Meſſiah* is *already come into the world.*

Secondly, That *Jeſus Chriſt*, whom we acknowledge, and profeſs, *is that promiſed Meſſiah.*

Thirdly, The *importance* of that phraſe, *Chriſt came into the world*; what that implies. See P. 257.

Fourthly, That the *deſign* of Chriſts coming into the world was to *ſave ſinners.* See P. 263.

Fifthly, How Chriſt carried *on this deſign:* or, in what *reſpects* Chriſt may be ſaid to *ſave ſinners.*

Sixthly, Why it was *neceſſary* Chriſt ſhould come in order to this end, viz. *mans ſalvation.*

Seventhly, Upon what *accounts* this is and ought to be a *moſt acceptable doctrine.*

I ſhall be brief in the two firſt, as knowing I ſpeak to Chriſtians: onely ſuggeſt ſome things to ſtrengthen your faith.

And firſt, That the *true Meſſiah is come* appears upon a four-fold account. 1 *Partic.*

I. Becauſe all thoſe cities and places, in which Chriſt was in order to the fulfilling of the *propheſies* in the old Teſtament, to be *born, brought up*, and *manifeſt* himſelf in, are long ſince *ruined*, and utterly *demoliſhed.* He was to be born at *Beth-lehem: But thou Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thouſands of Judah, yet out of thee ſhall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Iſrael*, Mic. 5. 2. He was to dwell at *Nazareth*, to come into *Jeruſalem, Rejoyce greatly, O daughter of Zion; ſhout, O daughter of Jeruſalem; Behold, thy king cometh unto thee*, &c. Zech. 9. 9. And that while the *ſecond Temple* ſtood, the *glory* of which upon this onely account was propheſied by *Haggai* to be greater then the *glory* of the *former Temple*, becauſe of the perſon of the *Meſſiah* in it, *Haggai* 2. 7, 9. Add *Malachy*, who lived in the time the *ſecond Temple* was built, and was contemporary with the Prophet *Haggai.* But now all theſe *cities* are ruined, and which is a clear evidence the *Meſſiah* is come, the *ſecond Temple* deſtroyed, and *Jeruſalem* demoliſht by the *Romanes.* Mal. 3. 1.

II. The *ceaſing* of the *Jewiſh politie* and *commonwealth:* which was not to be, till the *coming* of the *true Meſſiah*, according to *Ja-*

cob's propheſie, *Gen.* 49. 10. which the Antient *Jews* themſelves underſtood of the *Meſſiah*. *Per quem CHRISTI ADVENTUM non eſt intelligenda Chriſti nativitas, ſtetit enim reſpublica Judæorum, & firmam aliquam politiam habuit per annos ſeptuaginta duos poſt Chriſtum natum; ſed per adventum Chriſti intelligimus manifeſtationem Chriſti per Evangelium*; *By which coming of Chriſt, we muſt not underſtand Chriſts birth, for then there was a commonwealth of the Jews, which had too ſome kinde of a ſettled politie for ſeventy two years after Chriſt was born: but we underſtand by the coming of Chriſt the manifeſtation of him by the Goſpel:* in which ſence 'tis ſaid *Matth.* 10. 23. *ye ſhall not have gone over the cities of Iſrael till the ſon of man be come.* The power of *life* and *death* was taken from them in our Saviours time, as appears by their own ingenuous confeſſion to *Pilate*, John 18. 31. *Then ſaid Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law; the Jews therefore ſaid unto him, It is not lawfull for us to put any man to death.* *Romani Judeæ præfectos habebant, cogebant fidem homagii præſtare Cæſari; numiſma cudere illis licitum non fuit.*

Molin. Vates p. 289.

Idem de diſciplina & inſtructione Judæorum.

Cram. p. 91.

I ſhall not diſpute the *punctual* time *when* this *Scepter* departed, whether in *Herod's*; or when *Titus* deſtroied the *Iewiſh State*, which I muſt think moſt probable, becauſe then the *gathering of the nations* was to Chriſt, by the *coming in* of the *Gentiles*: but this is evident, that *that Politie* is now deſtroyed, and the Jews a ſcattered nation throughout the world.

III. The abrogation of the Jewiſh worſhip, and Levitical ceremonies. This was propheſied by *Daniel* as one thing which ſhould be by the coming of the Meſſiah, *In the midſt of the week he ſhall cauſe the ſacrifice and the oblation to ceaſe*, Dan. 9. 27. as wholly needleſs after the coming of the Meſſiah, whom they typified and prefigured. God never intended the Jewiſh worſhip ſhould continue alwaies, as being a heavy yoke, and, after the coming in of the Gentiles (eſpecially, as to the place of it) impoſſible, as *Euſebius* demonſtrates in the third chapter of his firſt book, *De demonſtratione Evangelica*. *Moſes* himſelf ſpoke of another Prophet, *Deut.* 18. 15, 18. who ſhould deliver from *the bondage of ſin* to the *heavenly Canaan*; as *Moſes* had done from *Egypt's*; as a *Law giver* to the Gentiles, when the Jewiſh rites ſhould be wholly aboliſhed; and propheſying and viſion failed amongſt the Jews, when this great Prophet was come into the world.

IV. The *heathen Oracles are ſilenced*, and their *idolatrie deſtroyed*; which was to be at the coming of the Meſſiah, according to the propheſie of *Zechariah*, *And it ſhall come to paſs in that day, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land,*

and

and they ſhall no more be remembred: and alſo I will cauſe the prophets, and the unclean ſpirit to paſs out of the land, Zech. 13.7. and of *Iſaiah, And the idols he ſhall utterly aboliſh,* Iſa. 2. 18. and, at verſe 20. *In that day a man ſhall caſt his idols of ſilver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himſelf to worſhip, to the moles, and to the bats.* And ſo it happened at the coming of our Meſſiah, when *Auguſtus*, conſulting the Oracle about his ſucceſſour, received this anſwer, Παῖς Ἑβραῖος κέλευσε με τόνδε δόμον περιλιπεῖν, &c. *An Hebrew childe hath bid me leave theſe ſhrines*; which Oracle *Auguſtus* having received, erected an Altar in the Capitol with this inſcription, *Ara primogeniti Dei. Plutarch* in his book, Περὶ τῆς ἐκλελοιπότων χρησείων, *de defectu oraculorum, concerning the defect of the Oracles*, confeſſeth the thing, though he knew not the cauſe. Hottinger, p. 35.

——*Delphis Oracula ceſſant,*

Juvenal obſerved in the time of *Domitian*; and the reſt decayed ſoon after.

Secondly, *That our Jeſus is the promiſed Meſſiah*, appears, 2. *Partic.*

I. From the *evident fulfilling* of all the propheſies of the old Teſtament concerning the *Meßiah* in Jeſus Chriſt the *Meßiah*. He was to be *born of a virgin*, Iſa. 7. 14. *Behold a virgin ſhall conceive, and bear a Son*: ſo was our Jeſus, *Matth.* 1.23. And that too in the citie of *Bethlehem*, Mich. 2.2. *But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thouſands of Judah, yet out of thee ſhall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Iſrael*: and ſo was Chriſt, *Matth.* 2. 11. brought up too in *Galilee*, Matth. 2. 22. and he rode in *triumph into Jeruſalem*, Matth. 21. as it was propheſied of the *Meßiah*, Zech. 9.9. *Rejoyce greatly, O daughter of Zion, ſhout, O daughter of Jeruſalem, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee*, &c. There is not a paſſage in the death of Chriſt, but was in anſwer to ſome propheſies of the old Teſtament, his *ſide pierced*, as foretold by *Zechariah, They ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced*, Zech. 12. 10. his *drinking of vinegar*, in *Pſal.* 69. 21. *In my thirſt they gave me vinegar to drink*: his *crucifying amongſt thieves*, Iſa. 53. 12. *He was numbred among the tranſgreſſours*: his *death and burial*, Iſa. 53. 9. *He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death*: yet ſo as not to ſee *corruption*, Pſal. 16. 10. *Thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell, nor ſuffer thy holy one to ſee coruption*: but to be raiſed again, as in *Acts* 2. 25, 26. By the harmony of which events to the propheſies, the *Gentiles* were convinced to leave their *Idolatrie*, and to embrace the Doctrine and Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt: witneſs *whole nations*, whoſe converſion from a ſetled, inveterate Idolatrie, in a ſhort time, without worldly power and force; no enticements of pleaſure or profit; no carnal means; in the face of fire and faggot,

brought over to the acknowledgement of a *crucified Meſsiah*, muſt needs ſpeak God in it, and muſt certainly be imputed to the care of God in fulfilling thoſe propheſies, which he that runs may read concerning the *calling* and *coming in* of the Gentiles at the coming of the *Meſsiah*; ſee *Iſaiah* 2. 2, 3. *Jer.* 16. 19. *Malachi* 1. 11. *Geneſ.* 49. 10. all which evidently ſpeak the truth of our *Meſsiah*.

II. From thoſe many *miracles*, by which Chriſt confirmed his Doctrine, which, if you obſerve, are the very ſame, which the Prophet *Iſaiah* foretels ſhould be wrought by the true *Meſsiah*, Iſaiah 35. 5,6. In reference to the fulfilling which propheſies Chriſt bad *John's* diſciples tell him, as an argument that Chriſt was he which ſhould come; that the *blinde received their ſight*, &c. Matth. 11. 5. It was a rational concluſion which they made, *John*, 6. 14. when they had ſeen the miracle of the multiplied loaves, *This is of a truth that Prophet that ſhould come into the world*: μέγαν ἄνδρα ἀυτὸν λέγων χρὴ, ἦν γὰρ παρωδὸν ἔργων ποιητὴς, *a teacher* τ'αληθῆ δεχόμενον. And far be that blaſphemie from the thoughts of any of our hearts, that theſe were done by Magick, or the power of the devil; why did not his enemies accuſe him of it? eſpecially when it was one condition in the judges of the *Sanhedrim*, that they ſhould be *skill'd in magick* that they might detect and Judge others for it. For certainly, then others, who envied Chriſt the glorie that he got by theſe miracles, would out of envy and emulation have learnt the ſame art, which yet no hiſtory makes mention of, that ever I ſaw, or heard of. Nor were they done by the power of the devil, for the manner of Chriſts miracles were *caſting out of devils*, and *Beelzebul* could not caſt out *Beelzebul*; and ſurely, Chriſt would have affected privacie and ſolitude, if he had intended to have impoſed upon the credulitie of the ignorant, who yet choſe the moſt *conſpicuous places*, and the *greateſt multitude* to work his miracles amongſt, having oft thouſand eyes witneſſes of them. The Jews themſelves can give no other account to a Pagan, why they credit the miracles of the old Teſtament, then the teſtimony of thoſe that ſaw them: the *rapture of Elias*, onely upon the bare teſtimony of *Eliſha*, 1 King. 2. 1. If they will not give credit to the Apoſtles teſtimonies (though no reaſon why an *hiſtorical faith* ſhould not be given them) yet let them credit *Joſephus*: which the Jews ſay cannot be found in their copies, and no wonder, *Nam Judæi non habent* Joſephum *filius* Malachiæ, *qui graves ſcripſit libros Antiquitatum de quo nos loquimur*, *ſed* Joſephum *filium* Gorionis, *qui aliquid ſimile ſcripſit Hebraicè*, ſaies *Bellarmine*. And theſe things ſpeak the truth of all theſe miracles, as he that was cured of his blindneſs argued

Hornbeck, pag. 234.

Grot. de verit. Relig. pag. 222. &c.

Joſephus Antiq. lib. 18. *c.* 4.

Bellarm. de ſcript. Eccleſ. p. 38.

ed with the *Phariſees*, John 9. 30,31,32,33. *Why, herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes: now we know that God heareth not ſinners; but if any man be a worſhipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blinde: if the man were not of God he could do nothing.*

III. From that *general expectation*, which the Jews themſelves had of their *Meſsiah* to come into the world at *that time*, when Chriſt lived: which expectations were grounded upon the propheſies of the old Teſtament, eſpecially upon *Daniel* the ninth, which occaſioned a general conflux of the Jews from all parts to ſee the event. That the Jews now expected their *Meſsiah*, is evident from *Luke* 19.11. So ſtrong was this perſwaſion that the *Meſsiah* ſhould appear about this time, that, as *Grotius* obſerves, ſome took *Herod* to be him, whence the *Herodians*: others one *Judas*, whom they called *Bar-Cochebah*, that is, *the Son of a ſtar*, alluding to *Numb.* 24. 17. *There ſhall come a ſtar out of Jacob*, &c. ſome one, ſome another to be the *Meſsiahs*, by which the *Jews* themſelves ſubſcribe to the truth of the *Meſsiah*. Though as *Vives* obſerves, none before Chriſt durſt profeſs himſelf the *Meſsiah*, yet the expectation was ſo general, that the Heathens themſelves had report of the *Jews* expectation of their *Meſsiah* at that time, as both *Tacitus* and *Suetonius* relate. It was *vetus & conſtans fama*, ſaies *Suetonius*: which they could not have but from the *Jews* computation, *ex antiquis Sacerdotum libris*, ſaith *Tacitus*. I might add further as confirmation of this *Goſpel-doctrine* the *ſpotleſs holineſs* of Chriſt the Teacher; the exactneſs of that holineſs it requires; the repugnancie of it to intereſts, and carnal deſigns (which ſpeaks it no politick plat-form) the wonderfull propagation of it by weak inſtruments, and againſt ſtrong oppoſitions, together with the glorie of that reward it promiſes to the obeyers of it; all which ſpeak it to be πιστὸς λόγος, *a faithfull ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation.* But this onely as a preface to the future diſcourſe.

Grot. p. 265.
Hotting. p. 12.
Vives, p. 491.
Hornb. p. 218.

Thirdly, *The importance of this phraſe.* 3. *Partic.*

This phraſe doth not ſpeak,

I. Any *local motion* of the *Divine nature*: for that being infinite, and ſo *every where*, is not capable of any *local mutation*; which is the property onely of finite natures. Chriſt did not leave heaven, when he came into the world: it is true, he is ſaid, *John* 3. 13. to *come down from heaven*, and to *come from above*, verſe 31. Which is not to be underſtood, as if he had brought his humane nature from heaven, as the *Valentinians*, and *Marcioniſts* of old a-

Venit per quod homo erat, nam per quod Deus erat, ſemper hîc erat. Auguſt. *Tom.* 10. *pag.* 195. *de verb. Apoſt.*

buſed theſe places; for that was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghoſt, *Luke* 1. 35. *The holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, the power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee.* Nor yet muſt we underſtand it as by any change of place: but either becauſe his *humane nature* was produced not by any *earthly generation*, but by a *heavenly manner*, or becauſe of Chriſts willing ſubmiſſion, and humbling himſelf to take this nature upon him, and to *appear in the form of a ſervant*, as he is ſaid to do, *Phil.* 2.7.

II. Not a *real parting* with any of his *glory*: for that being *infinite* and *eternal*, as he was God, was as incapable of any diminution, as of any acceſſion: even then when he came into the world, and *took upon him the form of a ſervant, he counted it not robbery to be equal with God, Phil.* 2.6. Indeed, ἐκένωσε, *verſe* 7. he *humbled himſelf* as to his Divine nature, not abſolutely conſidered in it ſelf, but in reſpect of that voluntary *œconomy* and diſpenſation, whereby he condeſcended to take upon him our nature, and *the form of a ſervant*; but even then, when he was come *into the fleſh*, the Apoſtle tells you, he was *God over all, bleſſed for ever*, Rom. 9. 5. *A childe born*, Iſa. 9. 6. yet the *mighty* God, *Mich.* 5. 2. noting his being before born, in thoſe words, *whoſe going forth have been of old, from everlaſting.* But this phraſe ſpeaks five things.

I. *The pre-exiſtence of the Divine nature*: *viz.* that Chriſt *was* before he *came* into the world. This is alſo hinted in other like expreſſions of Scripture; as, firſt, that *Chriſt* was *manifeſted in the fleſh*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. which ſpeaks that he had an *exiſtence* before he came into the world. ſee 1 *John* 3. 8. *For this purpoſe the Son of God was manifeſted*, and to name no more, 1 *John* 4. 23. *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every ſpirit that confeſſeth that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh, is of God*, &c. *Hinc colligimus priùs fuiſſe apud patrem, quò oſtenditur coæterna ejus Divinitas*, ſaith *Calvin* upon this place. The Socinians uſe many ſhifts to evade this argument for Chriſt's Divinitie, as that to *come in the fleſh* is *to appear in infirmitie, miſery, and contempt*: but though *fleſh* in Scripture ſignifies ſometimes weakneſs; yet *to come in the fleſh*, is never ſo uſed. Beſides, the Apoſtle makes this an evidence of believers, *to confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh*: many unbelievers ſaw and acknowledged that he lived without pomp, and worldly Majeſty, in poverty and infirmity. See *Iſaiah* 53.2,3. A ſecond like expreſſion in Scripture is, that *God and man came to ſave ſinners*, which is from God, *Mat.* 16.17.

Object. Yea, but *Antichriſt* is ſaid *to come*, 1 John 2. 18. and yet he doth not therefore *exiſt before.*

Anſw. A lamentable ſhift, for Scripture muſt give light to Scripture,

pture; as the Lamps in the Tabernacle were to be lighted by one another, according to the Law. Our faith muſt be built upon the Analogie of Scripture, which in many parallel expreſſions ſpeaks this truth: as *Hebrews* 2. 16. ἐπιλαμβάνεται, *He took on him*, which muſt neceſſarily include the *pre-exiſtence* of that nature which did *aſſume* fleſh: ſo S. *John* tells you, *That the word was made fleſh*, *Joh.* 1.14. and that that word was *from the beginning*, and *truely God*, verſe 1. And nothing in this point is more clear then that ſaying of Chriſt's, *John* 16. 28. *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again I leave the world, and go to the Father.*

II. *The aſſuming humane nature into unitie of perſon and ſubſiſtence with the divine, and ſo appearing in the world.* This Scripture abundantly teſtifies (though among the Socinian Doctors it be *commentum hominum ſuperſtitioſorum*) as *Heb.* 2. 14. *He was made partaker of fleſh and bloud*, and *verſe* 16. *he took upon him the ſeed of Abraham:* and, *the word was made fleſh*, John 1.14. The *humane nature* not exiſting before aſſumed, but aſſumed in the firſt moment of its production by the overſhadowing of the Holy Ghoſt, ſo that Chriſt took our whole nature, body and ſoul, with all their Faculties, Properties, Affections, nay, with all *natural*, though not ſinfull, *infirmities*, that he might *in all things be like his brethren, ſin onely excepted*, Heb. 2. 17. without converſion or confuſion of *natures* or *properties*. And in this nature thus aſſumed, *Venit unus ſine peccato, qui ſalvos faceret à peccato*, ſaies S. *Auguſtine*, *One came without ſin, who might ſave from ſin.* He *appeared in the world*, which is the great myſtery the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. namely, *God manifeſted in the fleſh:* and by this aſſuming *humane nature*, he was capacitated for that great deſign of his coming into the world, which was to ſave ſinners, in order to which, God required a perfect obedience: therefore Chriſt is ſaid to be *made under the law*, Gal. 4. 4. and *Satisfaction by a price of bloud paid*; *for without bloud is no remiſſion*, Heb. 9. 22. Both which were by the Juſtice of God to be performed in the ſame nature, which had offended againſt the law, and ſo was liable to death through ſin.

Nihil minus habebat in natura, ſed nihil habebat in culpa; Aug. p. 105. Aug. *ibid.*

III. *Chriſt obſcuring the glorie of his Divinitie by a veil of fleſh.* For though, as I ſaid before, he parted with none of his glory, yet he much obſcured it by our weak and miſerable nature: though ſome rays of it broke out ſometimes in his diſcourſes, and, eſpecially, in his miracles, which oft cauſed the beholders to acknowledge him the *Son of God*; yet he ſeemed for a time to have laid aſide his Majeſtie, and Glorie, while he appeared in the world *without*

out form or comelineſs. Therefore, when he was ready to leave the world, ſee how he praies to his Father for a manifeſtation of that glory, which here was obſcured in the world, *John* 17.5. *And now, O Father, glorifie thou me with thine own ſelf, with the glorie which I had with thee before the world was:* where he praies not for any addition, or acceſſion of further glorie, but a diſcovery of the glory of his *Divine nature* through that *humane nature*, which he had aſſumed to himſelf.

IV. *In taking upon himſelf a ſtate of loweſt abaſement and humiliation. He took upon him the form of a ſervant*, Phil. 2.7. and ἐκένωσε, *quaſi ex* omni *ſeipſum in* nihil *reduxit*, ſaith *Beza*: and he *became poor for our ſakes*, 2 Cor. 8.9. *Hic erat per divinam majeſtatem, venit per humanam infirmitatem*, ſaies *Auguſtine*. He affected not earthly greatneſs and pomp, but declined it: and his life, from the Cradle to the Croſs, was but one continued ſcene of miſerie.

V. *Chriſt's willing and ready undertaking for ſinners. Coming* is a voluntary motion; Chriſt came into the world, freely, and willingly to undertake the work of ſaving ſinners. *Aſſumpſit animam & carnem hominis, non antea à ſe promerentis, nec ad illam percipiendam ſublimitatem virtute propriâ laborantis, ſed omnino gratiâ*, ſaies *Auguſtine*. He was not merited, or pre-engaged, but out of his *love he gave himſelf*, as the Apoſtle, *Gal.*2.20. *I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* He was not forced to it, but came freely, *John* 10.18. *No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of my ſelf: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again*, &c. Indeed, he is oft ſaid to be ſent of his Father, *John* 3.17. *God ſent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world*: and *Gal.*4.14. *When the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son made of a woman*; but it was by a voluntary conſent in Chriſt to the councel and deſign of God, decreeing Chriſt to the office of a Mediatour: therefore, *Acts* 2.23. it is ſaid by *Peter* to the ſcoffing Jews, *Him, being delivered by the determinate counſel, and fore knowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and ſlain him.* Chriſt is ſaid likewiſe to be ſealed by the Father, *John* 6.27. *Him hath God the Father ſealed:* and to be ſanctified and *ſent into the world by the Father*, John 10.36. but it was by the conſent and condeſcenſion of Chriſt, offering himſelf as a Sponſor, and Mediatour, and ſubmitting himſelf to the will of his Father, *Heb.* 10.5,7. Chriſt did voluntarily undertake for us, and his ſubmiſſion to the Father was not an act of the Divine nature, but voluntarily of the ſecond perſon, willingly offering himſelf to his Fathers juſtice, for the recovery

very of ſinners: and therefore Chriſt is ſaid oft to give himſelf, and that out of mere love, *Epheſ.* 5. 2,25. This expreſſion of *coming into the world* doth not onely ſpeak the event and iſſue, but the deſign, will, and ultimate end of Chriſt's coming: *quòd non gravatum ſalvat*, ſaith *Muſculus*, that *he did it freely and willingly.*

Application.

First, This ſpeaks *infinite love*; that God ſhould ſend Chriſt, and Chriſt come to undertake for ſinners. *God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us*, Rom. 5. 8. and, *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his onely begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth on him ſhould not periſh but have everlaſting life*, John 3. 16. Each word there heightens the love of God, a *Son given*, a *begotten Son*, an *onely begotten Son*, nay, a *welbeloved Son*, as in *Matth.* 3. 17. who was in *the boſome of his Father*, John 1. 18. that God ſhould *not ſpare his Son*, Rom. 8. 32. this muſt needs ſpeak love.

yea his dear Son Col. 1. 13.

It was an argument of *Abraham's* love to God, that at his command he with-held not his *Iſaac* (Gen. 22. 2.) from God, who yet gave him, and had power to command him again: But that God ſhould give his Son to the wicked, ungratefull, undeſerving world, muſt needs ſpeak a greater affection then that of *Abraham's* and what can that be leſs then an *infinite love*? When Chriſt did but ſhed a tear for *Lazarus*, the Jews collected his love from that: *John* 11. 35, 36. how much more may we, that Chriſt ſhould come into the world to ſhed his bloud for us? This indeed is *infinite love*, &c.

Secondly, This ſpeaks *abundance of comfort* to Chriſtians. Is Chriſt come into the world? hath he taken upon him our nature? then this ſpeaks comfort to true ſincere Chriſtians,

I. In caſe of their *imperfect obedience*, in caſe of their many failings and imperfections. Why, Chriſtian, do but maintain ſinceritie, and preſs on to perfection, and remember that Chriſt hath aſſumed *thy nature*, and in that perfectly fulfilled the Law, and that obedience is made thine through believing, and thou ſo accounted as righteous in the ſight of God; which the Apoſtle ſuggeſts as matter of comfort to Chriſtians, Rom. 8. 3, 4. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the fleſh, God ſending his own Son in the likeneſs of ſinfull fleſh, and for ſin condemned ſin in the fleſh: that the righteouſneſs of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit.* Chriſt in thy nature perfectly fulfilled the law, and that for thee.

II. In caſe of outward affliction for Chriſt. Chriſt hath taken

thy nature, and so is sensible of, and sympathizeth with thy afflictions. This was one end of Christ's coming into the world in our nature, subject to many miseries, *Heb.* 4. 15. *We have not an high-priest, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin*: and this must needs be matter of comfort. *Josephus* tells us how that a part of *Rome* being set on fire by the Jews, in which many of the Romanes perished, that this was their comfort, τὸ βλέπειν ὑπὲρ ἃ πεφίλει ἡ ψυχὴν ὀδυρώμενον, to see *Cesar*, for whom they ventred their lives, weep, as affected with their misery; surely, it must be much more solid comfort for Christians suffering for Christ, to think that He suffers with them. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* saies the voice from heaven to him, *Acts* 9. 4. and at *verse* 5. when he said, *Who art thou Lord?* it was answered, *I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest*: yet was his persecution onely against the persons of the Christians.

Joseph. l. 7. de bello Jud.

III. Against fear of death. Art thou afraid to die? remember Christ hath come into the world, and hath in thy nature *tasted death*, to deliver thee from the fear of it; See *Heb.* 2. 14, 15. The tree cast into the waters sweetned them; the consideration of the Cross and Death of Christ will sweeten death to a true Christian.

Thirdly, This may instruct you in five great duties: or teach you,

I. A lesson of humilitie. Christ came into the world in a mean, low condition, in the form of a servant: the Apostle makes this use of it, *viz. to teach us humilitie*, Phil. 2. 5, 6. *Let this minde be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, &c. Christ *emptied* himself, ἐκένωσε, *verse* 7. *exhausit* is *Tertullian's* word by which he translates it: and art thou full, and bigg with pride? Christ himself would have you learn this lesson from him, *Matth.* 11. 29. *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.*

II. Contempt of the world, and disaffection to outward pomp and greatness. Remember thy Saviour came into the world, and had not where to lay his head; and when they would *have made him king*, he *withdrew* himself as scorning it, *John* 6. 15. He was made poor for thee: this should teach thee to undervalue the world; especially, if Christ calls for it; thou mayst know the world is little worth, thy Saviour so undervalued it. Thou shouldest with Saint *Paul count all things loss for the excellency of Christ*, Philip. 3. 8.

III. Chear-

III. Chearfulneſs in our obedience to Chriſt. He came into the world chearfully, and readily to undertake for thee. It was his *meat and drink to do the will of his Father, viz.* in order to ſalvation: and how powerfully ought this to provoke Chriſtians to a chearfull obſervance of Chriſt? He came into the world to die for thee; and therefore thou ſhouldeſt in an ingenuous return of thankfulneſs live to him; the Apoſtle judged this a rational inference, 2 *Cor.*5.14, 15. *For the love of Chriſt conſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judge; that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live, ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves; but unto him, who died for them, and roſe again.* His coming into the world to die for ſinners offered a holy violence to S. *Paul.* Yea, this was the very end of Chriſt's undertaking, and giving himſelf for us, *Titus* 2. 14. *Who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquitie, and purifie unto himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works:* zealous, or ready and chearfull. Chriſt's love prompted him to a willing undertaking for us: and how ſhould it provoke us to a chearfull obedience unto him? *Luke* 1.74, 55. *That we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him, all the days of our life.*

IV. Endeavours and deſires to partake of the grace of Chriſt. Chriſt is come into the world, hath taken our nature, and this to that end, that we might partake of his grace: he came into the world as the Son of man, that by him, we might be made the ſons of God.

V. And laſtly, Hatred and deteſtation of ſin. This was it, which brought Chriſt from the boſome of his Father, which pierced his ſides, and wounded his heart, that, in the anguiſh of it, he cried out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* indeed, as to the event, we may crie out with him, *Felix culpa*, it was an happy guilt, which brought us ſuch a Saviour; but in the mean time let us eye our ſins, through the Wounds and Bloud of Chriſt, who *came into the world to ſave ſinners*, and *mourn. I will pour upon the houſe of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication, and they ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced: and they ſhall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his onely ſon, and ſhall be in bitterneſs for him, as one that is in bitterneſs for his firſtborn,* Zech. 12.10. Thy ſins brought Chriſt into the world, and that leads me to

The fourth particular, *viz:*

That Chriſt's deſign of coming into the world was to ſave ſinners. 4. *Partic.*

Alenſis and *Scotus* are of opinion, that *though man had never ſinned, yet Chriſt ſhould have come into the world, for the greater perfection of the world, and communication of divine goodneſs,* (though *in natura impaſsibili*, which is a groundleſs raſh conjecture) *or elſe for the confirmation of men and Angels in their ſtate of righteouſneſs and happineſs.* That Angels are confirmed by Chriſt, I think may ſafely and piouſly be aſſerted (whence he is ſaid to *reconcile all things, whether in heaven, or in earth, Coloſſ.* 1.20.) though *others think it was from God, as a *rewarder* of their *continued obedience.* But, that Chriſt ſhould have come into the world, if man had not ſinned, Scripture gives us no ground to believe; nay, both it and right reaſon do evidently evince the contrary: as,

* *Burgeſs p.* 133. *Of the Covenant.*

I. *There would have been no neceſsity of his coming. Valentia* thinks Chriſt had not come for *venial ſins* onely; that aſſertion being built upon a falſe ground, viz. that *any ſin is in its own nature and demerit venial*, which is contrary to Rom. 6.23. *The wages of ſin is death.* But, that's certain, had there been *no ſin*, there had been *no need* of Chriſt, for *Tolle morbos, tolle vulnera, & nulla eſt medicina cauſa*, ſaith *Auſtin.* What need of a *Phyſitian*, where there is no *diſeaſe?* therefore I obſerve that each *Scripture-expreſsion*, whereby Chriſt is ſet out to us, ſpeakes a reference unto this. He is called a *Saviour*, *Tit.* 1.3,4. and what need of a Saviour, where there is no *ſin?* He is called a *Mediatour*, 1 *Tim.* 2.5. that had bin needleſs had God and man continued friends: *a Phyſitian, Iſa.* 61.1. that ſpeaks a reference to a *diſeaſe*: a *ranſome*, 1 *Tim.* 2.6. that too had been needleſs had we not been *in bondage* to *ſin* and *ſatan:* a *ſurety*, Hebr. 7.22. and that needleſs too had there been no debt contracted, no *obligation* to divine juſtice: a *fountain*, Zech. 13.1. no uſe of that, if man had not been *defiled* by ſin: a *reconciler*, *Col.* 1.21. what need of that had not man been *eſtranged*, and at enmity to God? a *ſhepherd*, uſefull when ſheep are ſtrayed, 1 *Pet.* 2.25. 'Tis the reaſon of his name *Jeſus*, Matth. 1.21. *Thou ſhalt call his name Ieſus; for he ſhall ſave his people from their ſins.*

Aug. ſerm. 9. *de verbis Dom. p.* 198.

II. *Scripture every where aſſerts the ſalvation of ſinners, as the great end of Chriſts coming into the world:* as *Luke* 19.10. *The Son of man is come to ſeek, and to ſave that which was loſt.* Had not the *ſheep* gone *aſtray*, the *groat* been *loſt*, the *ſon* a *prodigal*, they had never been *ſought* for, *Luke* 18. So *Matth.* 20.28. *The ſon of man came not to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter, and to give his life a ranſome for many*; that is, for the purchaſe of their ſalvation: and again, *John* 10.18. *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly:* and Chriſt ſaith, he *came to call ſinners to repentance*, Matth. 9.13. Now it is a known rule,, *ſublato fine, tolluntur media*

media ad finem: if you ſuppoſe not the ordination of the *means* to the *end*, you make them wholly uſeleſs; for the neceſsitie of them is *relative* to the end: and therefore ſuppoſing *man not to have ſinned*, we cannot rationally imagine Chriſt ſhould have *come into the world*, the Scripture laying down this as the *principal end* of his coming.

Two cautions here muſt be obſerved;

1. This was his *principal end*, not in *oppoſition* to the *advancing* of *Gods glory*; which was the *ultimate end* of all Chriſts undertakings. The *ſalvation of ſinners* was but *ſubordinate* to this, ſee *Ioh.* 17.4. and the glory both of *juſtice* and *mercy* was magnified in this: for at the firſt coming of Chriſt was proclaimed *glory to God on high*, Luk. 2.

2. Not in *oppoſition* to the other *ſubordinate ends:* as *ſetting Chriſtians an example, revealing the way of life and ſalvation:* all which were in order to this deſign, as ſhall appear preſently.

III. *Each undertaking of Chriſt had an influence upon, and ordination to this end:* his *birth*, as the Angels ſaid to the ſhepherds, *Luke* 2. 11. his *death*, that was the *price of our ſalvation*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 19. he came on purpoſe *to take away ſin*, 1 *Joh.* 3. 5. *to deſtroy the works of Satan*, v. 8. to ſet us an *exact example of pietie*, to *reveal to us the way of ſalvation*, to perform all thoſe actions to which he was anointed, and deſigned, *Iſa.* 61. 1. and all theſe in order to the promoting this great end of his coming, the *ſalvation of ſinners*. Now that to which a man orders and levels all his actions, we conclude to be his principal end; ſo here, &c. The prayers he put up, *Joh.* 17. the ſorrows he ſuffered, the ſhedding his tears in the garden, his bloud upon the croſs, was all to this end; his conflicts with the ſtorms of the world, the frowns and anger of his Father, were all in order to this end.

IV. *Scripture highly extolls and magnifies the love of God, in ſending Chriſt, upon this very account, that he came to ſave ſinners*: as in *Rom.* 5.8. The love of God would have been leſs admirable in ſending his Son, if he ſhould have taken our nature, though we had never ſinned. Obſerve, I pray, with what account the Apoſtle advanceth the love of God, 1 *Joh.* 4.10. *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and ſent his ſon to be the propitiation for our ſins:* not for the greater perfection of the world, which is *Scotus* his account. The Scripture is wholly ſilent as to any ſuch reaſon of Chriſts coming, but as a *propitiation for ſin.*

V. *This was the moſt ſuitable means to ſuch an end.* Chriſts *coming into the world*, as I have formerly opened it, is a moſt proportionable means for ſaving ſinners: for man by ſin having endeavoured to lift himſelf above the condition of his creation, could by no means

Eſtius, lib. 3. pag. 2.

be more ſuitably reſtored, then by Chriſts humiliation, and taking upon him the *form of a ſervant.* Man at firſt affected to be like God, *eritis ſicut dii*, and God now to ſave him condeſcends to appear in the *likeneſs of ſinfull fleſh*, Phil. 2. 7. *and he humbled himſelf to the death of the croſs*, &c.

VI. *Conſider Chriſt did not come into the world by aſſuming our nature for the dignity of it*: (for then he might have aſſumed the *angelical nature*, when on the contrary the Apoſtle tells us, he took not on him the *nature of Angels*, Hebr. 2. 16.) but *propter indigentiam*, becauſe of our *want* and *indigencie*, that we had been utterly undone without him: and therefore the Angels themſelves, when they proclaimed the *birth* of Chriſt to the *ſhepherds*, proclaimed this at the end of it, *Luke* 2. 11, 14. *Good will towards men.* Therefore had not man been in this indigent, helpleſs, hopeleſs condition, Chriſt had not come into the world: *Si homo non periiſſet, filius hominis non veniſſet: periret homo, venit Deus homo, & inventus eſt homo.*

Bonavent. in d. 3. Art. 2. qu. 2.

Auguſt. Tom. 10. p. 195.

VII. And laſtly this doth moſt *heighten that myſterie of Chriſts incarnation, or coming into the world*; & ſerves moſt to enflame Chriſtians hearts with *pious affection* to, and *holy admiration* of the love of Chriſt in coming into the world: the firſt, becauſe this had not been, unleſs upon the moſt cogent, weightie reaſons, as the *undoing* and *ruine* of one of Gods *nobleſt creatures*, and the *offence* and *diſhonour* of an *infinite God*; and the latter, that Chriſt ſhould come and condeſcend to take *our nature*, and a ſtate of *humiliation* for our ſalvation, which no other motive could have provoked him to. What thankfull admiration ſhould it create in our hearts, and we ſay with Mary, Luke 1. 46, 47. *My ſoul doth magnifie the Lord, and my ſpirit hath rejoyced in God my Saviour*: that he ſhould thus *come into the world to ſave ſinners, of whom* we are *chief?*

Fifthly, *How* Chriſt carried on *this deſign*: or, in *what reſpects* be ſaid *to ſave ſinners?*

I. *Not barely by giving himſelf an example, and pattern for a Chriſtians imitation.* It is true that *Chriſtum imitari ſalutis via eſt*, which *Socinus* make his ground for this aſſertion, *to imitate Chriſt is the way to ſalvation.* It lies upon Chriſtians as a *duty* to *walk as he walked*, 1 *John* 2. 6. *He that ſaith he abideth in him ought himſelf alſo ſo to walk even as he walked.* And it is one end of Chriſts death, to ſet us a *copy* of *patience* and *ſubmiſſion*, 1. *Pet* 2. 21. *Becauſe Chriſt alſo ſuffered for us, leaving us an example that ye ſhould follow his ſteps.* And it is as true that, whoever expects upon good grounds Chriſt for his *purchaſe* muſt take him as his *pattern* and *example*; but through the *rebellion* of the fleſh and the *temptation* of *Satan* it comes to paſs that

that the beſt of us can but *imperfectly* imitate him, and ſo ſtill ſtand in need of a Saviour, to ſatiſfie for the *imperfections* of our obedience, through whom it muſt be accepted. Beſides, in this ſence the Prophets, Apoſtles, and Martyrs may be called Saviours, as ſetting us an example of piety and patience: and ſo the Apoſtle bids us to account of them Jam. 5. 10. *Take, my brethren, the Prophets who have ſpoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of ſuffering affliction, and of patience.* And therefore we muſt riſe higher then this, in conceiving Chriſt to ſave ſinners: therefore the Apoſtle, where he propounds the death of Chriſt as an example of patience, ſuggeſts it alſo as an expiation for ſin, and purchaſe of our pardon, as 1 *Pet.* 2. where exhorting to patient ſuffering for well-doing after the example of Chriſt, *ver.* 21. *For even hereunto were ye called: becauſe Chriſt alſo ſuffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye ſhould follow his ſteps*; he adds at *ver.* 24. *who his own ſelf bare our ſins in his own bodie on the tree, that we, being dead to ſin, ſhould live to righteouſneſs, by whoſe ſtripes ye were healed.* And it is the iſſue of Chriſts undertakings, his death and purchaſe, that we are redeemed from ſin, and freed to walk in imitation of Chriſt in righteouſneſs and holineſs: then which Scripture ſpeaks nothing more plainly, as is clear from *Gal.* 1. 4. *Who gave himſelf for our ſins that he might deliver us from this preſent evil world*: and 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. *Foraſmuch as ye know, that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold, from your vain converſation*, &c. and ſo *Titus* 1. 14. *Who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie unto himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

II. *Not as Chriſt is an inſtrument to convey ſalvation to ſinners:* which is another account *Socinus* gives why Chriſt may be ſaid to *ſave ſinners.* It is true indeed, that Chriſt doth beſtow and confer eternal ſalvation upon ſinners; yea, but not inſtrumentally, and principally, but in joynt efficiency with his Father, who, as one in *being*, ſo in working, as in *John* 10. 28, 30. therefore he is called αἴτιος σωτηρίας, *the Authour of eternal ſalvation.* Hebr. 5. 9. and ἀρχηγὸς τῆς ζωῆς *Acts* 3. 15. *the Prince of life.*

III. *Not onely becauſe he revealed the way of ſalvation to ſinners:* though this be true, yet it is too ſhort and inſufficient: for thus the Prophets, Apoſtles, and Miniſters of the Goſpel may be ſaid to ſave ſinners; as laying before them the way, and opening to them the Goſpel of ſalvation. So the Apoſtle of himſelf, 1 *Cor.* 9. 22. *I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means ſave ſome*: and *Acts* 16. 17. it is the confeſſion of the Damoſel poſſeſſed with the ſpirit of divination, *Theſe men are the ſervants of the moſt high God, which ſhew unto us the way of ſalvation*: & he exhorts *Timothy* ſo

to

to preach, as that he may *ſave them that hear him*, 1 Tim. 4. 16. If Chriſt be only in this reſpect a Saviour, then after he had by his Doctrine revealed the way to ſalvation, his death was altogether needleſs; upon which yet Scripture laies the great ſtreſs of ſaving ſinners: *He is the Saviour of the bodie*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Epheſ.* 5. 23. he tells you how, *verſe* 25. he *gave himſelf for it*, and expreſly, *Tit.* 2. 13, 14. *Who gave himſelf for us*, &c.

IV. *Not onely by confirming this doctrine revealed.* It is true, this was one end of Chriſt's coming, ſo ſaies our Saviour himſelf to *Pilate*, demanding of him, *Art thou a king?* John 18. 37. *To this end was I born, and for this cauſe came I into the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs unto the truth.* But, who can imagine that God ſhould give up his onely begotten wel-beloved Son, expoſe him to the ſcorns of men, frowns of God, and at laſt to a curſed ignominious death, onely for confirmation of Goſpel-doctrine, which was ſufficiently done by the innocencie of his life, and his miracles? for it is ſaid of the Apoſtles, *Mark* 16. 20. *That they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with ſigns following.* The Martyrs and Apoſtles might as well upon this account be called Saviours, who ſealed to the truth of the Goſpel with their bloud; as S. *Paul* ſaith of himſelf, *Acts* 20. 23, 24. *The holy Ghoſt witneſſeth in every city, ſaying, That bonds and afflictions abide me: But none of theſe things move me, neither count I my life dear unto my ſelf*, &c. *to teſtifie the Goſpel of the grace of God.* Chriſt is therefore ſaid to ſave ſinners by way of a real price paid, and purchaſe made: this Scripture ſpeaks expreſly, *Mat.* 20. 28. where it is ſaid, *The Son of man came to give his life*; λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν, *a ranſome for many*, which word λύτρον properly ſignifies to *redeem by way of purchaſe*, as thoſe other words, ἀντίλυτρον, ἀπολύτρωσις, ἀγοράσμός, ſo frequently uſed in Scripture, as to Chriſt giving himſelf for ſinners, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5, 6. *Coloſſ.* 1. 14. So that Chriſt did truely pay to God a price for the Salvation and recovery of ſinners, *Epheſ.* 5. 2. The effects of which, in reference to this end of ſaving ſinners, were

1. *A perfect ſatisfaction to Divine juſtice*; which required the puniſhment for ſin, either in the perſon offending, or in his ſuretie; hence περισφορὰ, and ἱλασμός, and ſuch like expreſſions in Scripture, *an oblation, a ranſome, a propitiation for ſin*, 1 John 2. 1. hence thoſe expreſſions, *Iſaiah* 53. 5. *The chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him*: and *verſe* 6. *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all: it pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him*, v. 10. and, *He made his ſoul an offering for ſin*; and this ſatisfaction, by reaſon of the dignitie and holineſs of the perſon, was exactly proportionable to whatever the juſtice of

of God could require for mans ſin. *Acts* 20. 28. he is ſaid to have *purchaſed the Church with his own bloud.* Sin bound us over to juſtice; Chriſt ſatisfied it, and ſo ſaves ſinners: and ſuppoſing God's accceptance of a ſuretie (which was an act of his higheſt grace and favour, and wholly ſubject to the liberty of his Will) his Juſtice could not require a more perfect ſatisfaction then was made by Chriſt.

2. *Pacifying of the wrath of God towards, and reconciling God to ſinners.* Indeed by the *Socinian* divinitie, God and man were never at odds. *Chriſtus non placavit Deum, ſed placatum oſtendit,* ſaith *Socinus.* It is true indeed, that the very coming of Chriſt into the world was an evidence and demonſtration of that great love of benevolence, or that Philanthropie whereby God was inclined to do good to loſt man, *John* 3.16. but no love of complacencie or delight in a ſinner, till actually reconciled by Jeſus Chriſt; but a mutual enmitie between God and man, and a hatred in God to man. *Eph.* 2. *children of wrath,* and, John 3. *verſe* laſt, *upon him who believeth not, the wrath of God,* which anger and wrath of God ſtands in contradiſtinction and oppoſition, not to the general love of God to his creatures, as ſuch, whereby he may deſign to do them good, but to the the ſpecial love and friendſhip of God to, and delight in his creature, which cannot be till juſtice be ſatisfied, and reconciliation perfected by Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. *Rom.* 3. 25. that is, his Juſtice in puniſhing ſin: and, *Epheſ.* 2. 15, 16. τὸ δὲ τ ἐχθρὰν δείκνυσι τὸ καλαλάξαι, τὸ δὲ τ πόλεμον τὸ εἰρηνοποιῆσαι, ſaith *Chryſoſtom, reconciliation* ſuppoſeth *enmitie,* and *making peace* includes *oppoſition;* till which be removed, the Holineſs, and Juſtice of God permits not the ſalvation of any ſinner.

3. *Pardon and juſtification from guilt,* Rom. 3.24. we are ſaid *to be juſtified freely by his grace: freely* in reſpect of us who confer nothing to it; *by grace,* in reſpect of Divine acceptation of this price paid by Chriſt, yet by *juſtice* and *merit,* if we reſpect Chriſt, who came into the world to die, and by death to *purchaſe our pardon,* Rom. 5.9.

So then, Juſtice being ſatisfied, God reconciled, and guilt removed by the undertaking of Chriſt, the deſign of ſaving ſinners, for which he came into the world, is effectually promoted.

Sixthly, *Why, and how it was neceſſary that Chriſt ſhould come in order to this end,* viz. *man's ſalvation.* 6. Partic.

I ſhall lay down theſe ſix poſitions for the determination of this

I. *It is abſolutely impoßible that the ſinner ſhould be ſaved, till ſin*

by ſome means be removed, and taken away. As it is contrary to God's *revealed will* to ſave any man in his ſin, without repentance and faith in Chriſt; ſo it is a contradiction to the holineſs and purity of his nature, as being a God of *purer eyes then to behold evil*, as it is *Hab.* 1. 13. I like not to diſpute the abſoluteneſs of God's power; but we muſt have a care of exalting God's power to the prejudice of his Holineſs: as ſoon may God leave to hate ſin (that is, as ſoon may God lay aſide his nature) as ſave any man obſtinately continuing and dying in his ſin.

II. *It was not abſolutely neceſſary for Chriſt to come into the world to ſave ſinners.* Not by any neceſſity of *coaction*, for he undertook this work willingly; hence it is ſaid, *Iſaiah* 53. 12. *He poured out his ſoul unto death*, &c. to note the willingneſs of Chriſt in the work. Beſides, it could not be abſolutely neceſſary, becauſe God might, without any prejudice to his Juſtice, have ſuffered man finally to have periſhed in his apoſtaſie: nor was he any way more obliged, then by his love and mercie, to provide for the recoverie of loſt man, more then the *Apoſtate Angels*; therefore Scripture evidenceth the love of Chriſt by this, *Epheſ.* 5. 2. and *Hebr.* 2. 16.

III. Suppoſing God's deſign of ſaving ſinners, *This was the moſt convenient way.* This I finde readily aſſented to by all, that it was moſt convenient every way: both

1. In reſpect of God, that the diſhonour, which he had received by ſin, might be repaired by the undertakings of a perſon of infinite dignitie, as Chriſt was.

2. That ſinners might be ſaved with ſecuritie to all Divine attributes, by ſatisfaction to his Juſtice, by Chriſt's ſufferings in the ſame nature, which had offended.

3. For ſecurity to his Holy Law, by Chriſt's unſinning obedience; and

4. With the higheſt exaltation of his Mercy; for *abundantioris erat miſericordiæ, quàm ſi peccata abſque ſatisfactione dimiſiſſet*, ſaith *Aquinas*. The Apoſtle from hence magnifies the riches of God's mercy, *Epheſ.* 2. 4, 5. Hereby God did alſo moſt remarkably communicate himſelf to the creature; a greater was not poſſible then a perſonal union to the humane nature. And then

Aq. 3. *p.q.* 46. *art.* 10.

5. Moſt convenient in reſpect of us, as being the moſt cogent incentive of love to God: *Ferrea & lapidea corda eſſe oportet, quæ non emolliet tam incomparabilis amoris divini ſuavitas*, ſaith *Calvin*. Hereby we have the advantage of an exact copie of all vertue, humilitie, patience, conſtancie, juſtice, and the like, and the moſt prevailing

Calvin in Joan. 15. 13.

vailing motive to imitate it in all holineſs and piety, 1 *Cor.* 6.v. laſt. And then,

Laſtly, It was moſt eminent in reſpect of Satan, that he might be more ſhamed and confounded, by being conquered in the nature, which he had ſeduced and ruined.

IV. Suppoſing the decree of God, and his revelation concerning mankinde, *Man's recovery and ſalvation was as impoßible any other way, then by Chriſt's coming into the world, as it is for God's purpoſe to be fruſtrated, or his will to be fallible, or plainly for God to lye.* To which purpoſe theſe Scriptures ſpeak expreſly, *Acts* 4.12. *Acts* 2.23. *Luke* 22.22. *Luke* 24.26,27.

V. *Suppoſing God's purpoſe of ſaving ſinners by way of a price and ſatisfaction, Chriſt's coming into the world was indiſpenſably neceſſarie.* And in this *Eſtius*, though he thinks it poſſible, that mankinde might have been recovered, and reconciled to God by a *mere man*, or an *Angel*, yet this would not have been a *redemption by an adequate price* or *purchaſe*, becauſe Juſtice required ſatisfaction in the *nature offending*, every individual of which being corrupted, and ſo obnoxious to Juſtice, and indebted to God in more then it was able to pay (as deriving all from him) was incapable of ſatisfying for its own ſcore, much leſs for the ſin of all mankinde: but ſuppoſing a man created pure, or an Angel, ſtill the obedience of this creature would be but finite, and ſo in the rigor of Juſtice unproportionable to expiate an offence againſt an infinite Majeſtie, or to repair that diſhonour and injurie which ſin doth to God; and then, the more the creature is enabled to do, the more it is indebted, therefore cannot merit, or ſatisfie for former ſin, *Pſal.* 49. 7. *None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ranſome for him.*

VI. And laſtly, *It is hard to conceive and imagine ſuch a power ſo abſolute in God, as by which* (ſuppoſing ſin and the creature fallen from him) *he ſhould reſtore and ſave it, without the undertakings of Chriſt.* I confeſs I approve not the raſh curious ſearchings into the depth of God's power, as eſteeming it more the dutie of Chriſtians, thankfully and piouſly to admire God's revelation of mans recovery by Chriſt, then nicely to enquire of the *poſſibility of another way of ſalvation. *Calvin* ſaith, God could have done it *ſolo nutu & verbo*, as he created all things at firſt by a word; which I cannot cloſe with, for ſurely God would never have given up his Son to ſuch miſeries and ſorrows, might ſinners have been ſaved by a word ſpeaking: this detracts from the glory of Chriſt's undertakings for ſinners. *Eſtius* thinks that *minima paßio Chriſti ſufficere potuiſſet pro juſto pretio redemptionis mundi:* by reaſon of the digni-

**Ubi ſemel oſtendit Deus quid fieri velit, ſtulta eſt ac noxia de poſſibilitate diſputatio.* Calv. *in Joh.* 16.7.

tie of the perſon; but neither can this be without the falling of God's truth to the ground, the truth I mean of this threatning, *Gen.* 2.17. *Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat: for in the day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die:* which muſt be made good either in the *perſons ſinning*, and ſo man had bin irrecoverably loſt; or in Chriſt, as their ſurety, and therefore death on him was indiſpenſably required by this threatning: therefore, this ſpecial way by the death of Chriſt was neceſſary, though not abſolutely, as I ſhewed before, yet *ex ſuppoſitione finis*, ſuppoſing God's purpoſe of ſaving ſinners after the threatning revealed.

To make out this, conſider three things.

I. *The indiſpenſableneſs of God's juſtice, requiring the puniſhment of, and ſatisfaction for ſin.* A truth, which every man carries a demonſtration of in his own breaſt, even thoſe who were wholly ſtrangers to God's revealed will of puniſhing ſinners: the *Heathens* I mean, who had inward fears of an avenging juſtice for ſin. And, if we aſſert juſtice to be an attribute eſſential to God, we muſt aſſert, I think, that God puniſhes ſin out of nature, not will onely, (though all the circumſtances of puniſhment be ſubjected in the freedom of God's will) otherwiſe, we muſt ſuppoſe it poſſible for God not to hate ſin; and ſo ſin, or no ſin, would be all one to God: now the Scripture founds God's hatred to ſin in his nature, *Heb.* 1.13. if then the juſtice of God be indiſpenſable, then ſatisfaction muſt be made before the ſinner can be ſaved.

II. *The impoſsibilitie of ſatisfaction to juſtice any other way then by the undertaking of Chriſt.* For no mere creature could lay down a price ſatisfactorie for the ſalvation of loſt man, though *Aquinas* thinks, that the obedience of the creature might have been available to the ſalvation of ſinners, yet confeſſeth that this would have been *Satisfactio ſufficiens imperfectè ſecundùm acceptionem Dei, non perfectè per adæquationem ad compenſationem culpæ commiſſæ: onely ſatisfaction improperly to divine acceptation, not properly by a proportionable compenſation for an offence againſt an infinite God:* but of this formerly.

Aq. 3. p. q. 1. art. 2.

III. *Chriſt did by his undertakings fully and perfectly ſatisfie Gods juſtice, in order to the ſalvation of ſinners:* hereby fully repairing the diſhonour God ſuſtained by ſin, by an obedience more ſatisfactory to God, then ſin was diſpleaſing; his undertakings were the actions of an infinite perſon, and ſo proportionable to ſatisfie for that infinite evil that is in ſin, and it was in it ſelf compleat, not depending in its worth upon divine acceptation to ſupply any defect in it: but ſuppoſing Gods acceptation of that ſatisfaction from a ſurety

which

which he might have required in our perſons (which is of infinite love and grace) he could not refuſe this, or require a more full price, and perfect ſatisfaction; *Hebr.* 10. 14. To ſumme up this, Gods juſtice required ſatisfaction, the creature could not give it; Chriſt as God-man made it, and onely could do it; therefore ſuppoſing the deſign of God to ſave ſinners, Chriſts coming into the world to undertake and die for ſinners was *neceſſarie*.

Seventhly, *Upon what accounts this is an acceptable doctrine.* 7 *Partic.*

I. The expreſſion in the Text ſpeaks it ſo, Πιστὸς λόγος, an expreſſion never uſed by the Apoſtle, but in matters of the higheſt concernment and importance; as,

1. In the *advancement of godlineſs and piety*; ſo it is uſed 1 *Tim.* 4. 8, 9. Πιστὸς ὁ λόγος καὶ πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος: and ſo indeed it is, as being indiſpenſably neceſſary to a Chriſtians preſent and future happineſs, as having *the promiſe of this life*, &c.

2. In *aſſerting juſtification by free-grace:* ſo *Tit.* 3. 7, 8. Πιστὸς ὁ λόγος, a doctrine ſure moſt acceptable to any, who have either a *ſenſe* of *ſin*, or *apprehenſions* of *mercy*. How acceptable muſt it needs be to an humbled ſinner, loſt in himſelf, to ſee *free-grace* coming in for his relief and ſuccour?

3. In *encouraging Chriſtians to ſuffer with Chriſt:* as 2 *Tim.* 2. 10, 11, 12, Πιστὸς ὁ λόγος, *It is a faithfull ſaying*. It is true, *afflictions* in themſelves are not *acceptable*; but conſidering who-ever ſuffers with and for Chriſt; and how the *croſs* uſhers in the *crown*; how if we *ſuffer with him*, we ſhall alſo *reign with him*, as the Apoſtle ſaith: it muſt needs be πιστὸς λόγος, &c.

II. The *nature of the thing* ſpeaks it *acceptable*; take it under theſe ſix plain notions.

1. As a *revelation of pardon and mercy to guilty condemned malefactours*. How acceptable is the news of *pardon* to a *ſentenced* perſon, expecting *daily execution?* ſuch is the Goſpel revealing Chriſts *coming* into the world to *ſave ſinners*. We are all in our natural condition *guiltie*, *liable*, and *ſentenced to death*; John 3. 18. *He that believeth not is condemned already*. When the ſoul comes to be humbled for ſin, and lyes under ſad fears, and expectation of the execution of this ſentence; O! how acceptable muſt the revelation of *pardon* needs be, through the undertaking of Chriſt for ſinners? ſuch *free pardon*, as *Iſa.* 43. 25. nothing in reference to us though in reference to Chriſts bloud ſhed, when he came, &c. *Eph.* 1. 7.

2. As *a proclamation of peace to enemies*. How acceptable is an *Embaſsie* of peace from a *prince* to his *ſubjects*, who are in rebellion? We were up in *Armes*, in *open hoſtilitie* againſt God, and by

our first apostasie had cast of our obedience, and broken our *allegiance*; now God by the Gospel proclaims *peace* to such rebels through Christ pacifying his Fathers wrath, and undertaking for mans offence, 2 *Cor.* 5.19. Christ purchased our peace by his bloud, *Coloss.* 1.20, 22. Christ offer'd himself a *hostage*, a *surety*, nay a *sacrifice* to procure our peace, and in the *fulness of time* came himself into the world to proclaim this *peace*, Eph. 2. 17. viz. to the Jews in his *person*, to the Gentiles by the Apostles his *messengers*: thus Christ spoke in S. *Paul*, and by him proclaimed this peace; 2 *Cor.* 13.3. and still sends his Ministers his *heraulds*, and *Embassadours* to solicite your reconciliation to God, that you would lay aside the enmity of your hearts against God, and to proclaim God reconciled to you. *He hath committed to us the word of reconciliation*, read this fully, 2 *Cor.* 5.18, 19, 20. The first Proclamation of Christs coming into the world by those heavenly heraulds was *peace on earth*; Luk. 2. 14. and surely *dulce nomen pacis*, as being a complex of all good desirable.

3. As *a proclamation of liberty to captives, and bond-men.* Imagine how acceptable would a *release* be to a *Turkish-gallie-slave*; or how gratefull the release from the *bondage of Egypt* to the Israelites bound for *Canaan*: so, and much more surely, must the revelation of liberty and freedome procured by Christ be to souls enslaved to *sin*, and *led captive by Satan at his will*, as the Apostle speaks 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. With what ecstasie of joy were the Jews returning from Babylon surprized, that they doubted whether the thing were true or not? *Psal.* 126. 1, 2. This return and deliverance figured out our *redemption* and freedome by Christ, as appears from *Rom.* 9. 27. taken from *Isa.* 10. 21, 22. So, sure, to those who know what it is to be in bondage to sin, and slavery to Satan, to those who do not love their *chaines* (as truth is we all naturally do) the revelation of that freedome, wherewith Christ hath set us free, must needs be most welcome. Our natural estate is an estate of *slavery*, John 8. 34. *Whosoever commiteth sin is the servant of sin*, the Gospel reveales libertie through Jesus Christ, v. 36. and how acceptable is this? The *chief captain* priz'd his *liberty*, because he purchased it with a *great summe of money*, Acts 22. 28. how much more valuable and acceptable is that Gospel which reveales this libertie, bought at no less expence then the *bloud of Christ* (1 *Pet.* 1. 18.) from *sin* and *Satan* to whom you were enslaved. We conclude them mad-men, that do not prize liberty, and surely they are not in their wits, who account not this a *faithfull saying* and *acceptable*, that *Christ is come into the world to save sinners.*

4. As *a discovery of treasures and riches to poor and beggerly persons.*

How

How acceptable is the finding of a *pearl* of price to a *poor man?* and ſo Chriſt muſt needs be to ſinners, who are naturally *poor*, and *miſerable*, and *naked*, as the Church of *Laodicea* is deſcribed, *Revel.* 3. 17. And ſo Chriſt would be indeed, were it not for the *pride* and *blindneſs* of mens hearts, that we are apt to ſay as they did, that *we are rich and encreaſed in goods, and ſtand in need of nothing*; and that's the reaſon Chriſt is no more acceptable to ſinners. There are *treaſures hid in Jeſus Chriſt*; Coloſſ. 2. 3. and he came into the world that we might partake of thoſe *riches*, (2 *Cor.* 8. 9.) and be rich with thoſe *durable riches* of *grace* and *glory*, which are in the hands of *wiſdome*, Prov. 8. 18. Chriſt is that *pearl* in the *field* of the Goſpel, which (*Chriſtians*) will enrich us, though we part with all to purchaſe it. Matth. 13. 46.

5. As *an offer of cure to diſeaſed perſons.* That's our condition out of Chriſt, as I have largly ſhewd before, now the Goſpel reveales healing by Jeſus Chriſt, *Hoſ.* 14. 4. *I will heal their back-ſliding.* Chriſt came into the world to be both our *Phyſitian*, and *phyſick*: *de pulvere creatus de pulvere ſanaris*; *caro te creaverat, caro te ſanat*, ſaies S. *Auſtin.*

6. As *the marrow, ſumme, and center of the Goſpel.* What the *Patriarchs* deſired (*Joh.* 8. 56.) the *Prophets* foretold, the *types* prefigured, the *Apoſtles* preached, the *promiſes* contain, the *Sacraments* ſeal, the *covenant* of grace aſſures, whatever concernes a Chriſtians comfort or happineſs is *epitomized* and *ſumm'd* up in this; that *Chriſt came to ſave ſinners:* and therefore it is *worthie of all acceptation.*

Application.

Firſt, *To the miniſters.* Let them then preach this acceptable doctrine, and lay open this truth, the great deſign of God in *ſaving ſinners* by Jeſus Chriſt. Chriſt is the ſumme of the Goſpel, and ſo ſhould be of our preaching. Obſerve the Apoſtles practiſe, 1 *Cor.* 1. 23. preaching *Chriſt* in oppoſition to their *carnal wiſdome*, which the Greekes affected, ver. 22. and though it be a *ſtumbling block to the Jews*, and *to the Greeks fooliſhneſs*, ver. 29. Thus *Paul* preacht Chriſt at *Athens*, though the *Philoſophers* there accounted him but a *babler* for it, and a *ſetter forth of ſtrange gods*, Acts 17. 18. Thus *Philip* to the *Eunuch* took *occaſion* from the *Prophet* to preach *Chriſt* unto him, *Acts* 8. 25. So ſhould the *Miniſters* of Chriſt take *all occaſions* to preach Chriſt; they are his Embaſſadours to negotiate for him in the world, they have both their *gifts*, and *commiſsion* from him, *Eph.* 4. 8, 11. and therefore ſhould act for him and *preach* his intereſt up: S. *Paul* tells you why he was commiſſionated to be a Miniſter

niſter of the Goſpel, for this very end to *preach Chriſt*, Epheſ. 3. 7, 8. *Brethren*, we are Gods Truſtees (as I may ſay) to whom he hath *committed the Goſpel*, as 'tis 1 *Tim.* 1. 11. We are falſe to our *truſt*, if we don't preach Chriſt, who is the *ſumme* and *ſubſtance* of the *Goſpel*. *Auſtin* laid this to the charge of *Tullies* workes, for which he rejected them, that *he did not finde the name of Chriſt in them*, and may not many diſlike our Sermons, as hearing no more of Chriſt in them.

Rom. 10. 15. Secondly, Then, *how acceptable ſhould the miniſtry of the Goſpel be to you? How beautifull even the feet of thoſe who bring you theſe glad tidings?* What proviſion is made for the entertainment of *Embaſſadours*, who come to a Nation on terms of *peace?* ſo ſhould the *embaſſadours* of Chriſt be acceptably entertained, as *commiſſionated* from Chriſt, to offer *rebellious ſinners* terms of *peace*, and to beſeech them to be *reconciled* to God, *Pſal.* 68. 8. The Apoſtle tells us thoſe are *miniſterial gifts*, Eph. 4. 11. It is the Apoſtles exhortation, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 12. *We beſeech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you*; what's that? their work is to diſcover and offer Chriſt to you. Surely, the *dove* was very welcome into the *Ark*, when ſhe brought an *olive branch* in her mouth, the *Embleme* of *peace*: ſo acceptable ſhould the miniſtry of the Word be, which reveals Chriſt as your peace, &c.

Thirdly, Examine *whether you be of the number of thoſe ſinners Chriſt came to ſave.* You will ſay, that's needleſs, *Did not Chriſt come to ſave all? Is it not ſaid expreſſely, Chriſt died for all?* 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. *and that he taſted death for every man? Hebr.* 2. 9. *and that God was in Chriſt, reconciling the whole world unto himſelf?* 2 *Cor.* 15. 19. How far Chriſts *intentions* extended in his *undertakings*, would be too large to diſcuſs; it will be ſufficient at preſent to note, that the *price* Chriſt paid is *ſufficient* in it ſelf for the expiation of all ſins, and that it extends to *all ſorts* of ſinners; notwithſtanding this, we know from Scripture, that the greateſt part of the world ſhall *periſh*, even of thoſe who are under the Goſpel; *Many are called, but few are choſen*; and Chriſt doth expreſſely reſtrain that *univerſality* which many to little purpoſe contend for, when he ſaith, he *laid down his life for his ſheep*, Joh. 10. 15. to *redeem his Church*, Acts 20. 28. and to *ſave* onely *his own people*, Matth. 1. 21. and *for thoſe who were given him of his Father*, in contradiſtinction to the *world*, Joh. 17. 9. Therefore there is room left for enquiry, whether we be of the number of them who ſhall be ſaved by Chriſts *undertakings* for us. Such are

I. *Repenting, returning ſinners:* ſo Chriſt tells you himſelf, Matth. 9. 13. *I am not come to call the righteous but ſinners to repentance:*

tance: that is, ſuch as are not righteous in their own opinion, for as if man had continued truely righteous, he had not ſtood in need of a Saviour; ſo if *ſelf-righteous*, he ſhall receive no benefit by Chriſt: ſuch he came not to call, but *ſinners*. *So*, you'l ſay, *we are all*: yea, but *humbled ſinners*; ſuch as are inwardly convinced and truly humbled for ſin. *Queſt.* But *doth not Chriſt call all?* Matth. 11.28. *Anſw.* Yes, but mark the limitation: ſuch as are *weary*, there's *eaſe* for ſuch: ſo *Luke* 19. 10. *The ſon of man is come to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt. So we were all loſt*, you'l ſay: True, but theſe are ſuch as *ſee* themſelves loſt, and irrecoverably undone without Chriſt. The *prodigal* was loſt long, but never returned to, nor was entertained by his Father, till he ſaw himſelf ſo, and mourned that he was ſo, *Luke* 15. 18. Chriſts commiſſion was to *binde up* ſuch onely as *mourn*, and to *proclaim peace*, and *the acceptable year of the Lord*, to ſuch onely, *Iſa.* 61. 1.

II. *Believing ſinners*: thoſe are the terms upon which the Goſpel offers ſalvation by Chriſt, for ſo runs the promiſe, *Mark* 16.16. *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved.* And Chriſt tells you himſelf, he came into the world for this end, *John* 12. 46. *I am come a light into the world, that whoſoever believeth on me, ſhould not abide in darkneſs.* And this was the deſign of God's ſending Chriſt for ſinners, that, *Whoever believed ſhould not periſh*, John 3. 16. This is the condition of the Covenant of grace and ſalvation, as Scripture every where expreſſeth: as *Rom.* 10.9,10. to this *Paul* directed the *trembling jayler*, *Acts* 16. 30,31. All a Chriſtians life is in Chriſt, and faith is the hand that receives him, *John* 1.72. Whatever a Chriſtian derives from, or partakes of by Chriſt, as *forgiveneſs*, Acts 10.43. is all by faith: the *Spirit of Chriſt*, Gal. 3.14. *inward puritie*, Acts 15. 9. *perſeverance*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *ſon-ſhip*, Gal. 3.26. and at laſt, *eternal ſalvation by Chriſt*, John 3.36. all which are received by faith.

III. *Reforming ſinners.* Chriſt came not to ſave any man *in his ſins*, but *from his ſins*; Tit. 2.14. *Who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquitie. Utique venit medicus ad ægrotum conſtat, ſed ideo venit medicus ad ægrotum, nè ſemper ſit ægrotus. Quod vult facere amat, non quod invenit*, ſaies S. *Auguſtin.* Whether do you then live, as thoſe Chriſt came to ſave? Chriſt came not to ſave you onely from the guilt of ſin, but from the power of ſin, *that ſin might have no more dominion over you*, Rom. 6.14. So that let no preſumptuous ſinner flatter himſelf in a continuance of ſin, upon this conſideration, that Chriſt came to *ſave ſinners*, for Chriſt ſaves and delivers them *from ſin* here, whom he ſaves *from wrath* hereafter, *Luke* 1.74,75. And the promiſe of mercy is made

Auguſt. Tom. 10. *p.* 100.

upon *forſaking ſin*, Prov. 28. 13. *Whoſoever confeſſeth and forſaketh his ſins ſhall have mercy.*

Fourthly, *Let us all heartily entertain this ſo acceptable a doctrine, as that meſſage of Chriſt's coming to ſave ſinners.* Entertain it in your ear, by attendance upon the Goſpel preached; but that is a ſmall matter: welcome it in your hearts, by believing it; otherwiſe, it will not profit you; as it is ſaid of them, *Heb.* 4. 3. *The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.* And not onely ſo, but in your lives too, by obeying it, and living ſuitably to the Goſpel, which diſcovers this acceptable doctrine to you, *Phil.* 1. 27. *Let your converſation be ſuch as becometh the Goſpel of Chriſt.* The end of this Goſpel-revelation was obedience and holineſs, ſuitable to our belief: ſo the *myſterie* of Chriſt is ſaid to be *made known to all nations for the obedience of faith*, Rom. 16. 26. for ſo our lives may witneſs our acceptance and hearty entertainment of this, as πιστὸς λόγος, *a faithfull ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, That Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinnes*, ὧν πρῶτός εἰμι ἐγώ, *of whom I am chief.* It was a fond opinion which the *Manichees*, and others of old maintained from this place of Scripture, *That Adam's ſoul was transfuſed into Paul's bodie*; becauſe the Apoſtle ſaies here he was πρῶτος, the *firſt*; but he means not in *time*, but in *nature* and *qualitie*. *Primum ſe dixit non peccatorum ordine, ſed peccati magnitudine*, ſaies *Auguſtine*. And that, I think, is not a much better interpretation, which *Grotius* puts upon the words; as if they were ſpoken ὑποβολικῶς, *ex ſumma modeſtia*; as if the Apoſtle had onely ſpoken by a *Rhetorical modeſtie*, as when he calls himſelf the *leaſt of the Apoſtles*, 1 Cor. 15. 9. The Apoſtle ſure intended not theſe words as *complements*. *Cave, nè exiſtimes Apoſtolum modeſtiæ cauſâ mentitum*, ſaith *Calvin*. Whence it ſeems ſome, long before *Grotius*, had miſ-interpreted the Apoſtle thus; as if he had but told an *humble officious lye*; perhaps as a bait to the applauſe of others, as it is the practiſe of ſome to pretend low thoughts of themſelves, that ſo others may magnifie and extol them. But the Apoſtle ſpoke not to know what others thought of him, but he ſpoke the real ſence, and inward perſwaſion of his ſoul, when he ſaith, *Of whom I am chief.* Why the Apoſtle ſpeaks this, and how he could truely ſay it of himſelf (eſpecially, as an Apoſtle converted, and brought home to Chriſt) I ſhall ſhew you in theſe eight particulars.

Auguſt. Tom. 10. *p.* 202.

Conſider the words, as

I. *Vox recognoſcentis ſtatum priſtinum:* as they were the words of the Apoſtle *ſadly reflecting upon his former condition, while in the ſtate of unregeneracie*, caſting his eyes backward upon his blaſphemie

mie and * perſecution, *verſe* 13. with which his life formerly, (though then conformed to the ſtricteſt Sect of the *Phariſees*) had been notoriouſly ſtained; ſo that though now a convert, yet he could not but reflect upon it, and in that reſpect entitle himſelf, *the greateſt of ſinners*. He ſaith, *I am*, becauſe his former condition was freſh, and alive in his memorie. It is a very uſefull meditation for *true converts* and *ſincere Chriſtians*, often to recollect and think of that miſerable condition, which they lay in *in their bloud*, before God reached out to them *a hand of mercie*; this the Apoſtle exhorts his converted believing *Epheſians* to, *Eph.* 1. 11, 12. and that the more to magnifie the *riches* of God's *mercy*, which he had mentioned at *verſe* 4. So *David*, Pſal. 51. 3. *I acknowledge my tranſgreſſions, and my ſin is ever before me.* Nothing promotes more a real thankfulneſs for, and pious admiration of *mercie*, then frequent reflexions on our *natural miſery*: ſo it did here in the Apoſtle, *verſe* 13. Beſides, how will this meditation keep men humble, when they ſee all their receipts to be the product and iſſue of *free-grace*; and what miſerable creatures they were before? See *Ezek.* 20.48. and, *Ezek.* 16.63. Of all the Apoſtles S. *Paul* was the humbleſt, who often reflected on his unconverted, natural condition. This alſo will put us on reſolved ſerviceableneſs for God, to conſider how much a diſhonour (*Chriſtians*) we were unto him in our natural condition. *Paul*, while unconverted, *a* * *furious perſecuter* of the Church, when converted, was the moſt *zealous propagatour* of the Goſpel, as *labouring more abundantly then all the reſt of the Apoſtles*, 1 Cor. 15. 10. And how watchfull, and circumſpect in their walking will they be, who oft think of the falls of their *natural eſtate*? A *mariner* in a ſecond voyage will carefully avoid that rock, on which in a former he was like to be ſhipwrackt; ſo will a true convert of *thoſe ſins*, which would have ruined him, if *infinite mercy* had not ſtept in for his relief and pardon. Who more endeavouring againſt ſin then S. *Paul*, while he was *running his Chriſtian race*? 1 Cor. 9. 27. And now as reflecting on his unconverted eſtate, he calls himſelf the *greateſt of ſinners*.

That's the firſt.

II. *Vox aggravantis peccatum.* The Apoſtle here, reſpecting the circumſtances of his ſins, whereby they were aggravated and heightned, calls himſelf, *the greateſt of ſinners*, becauſe joyned with *a furious perſecution* of the Chuch of God, it being eſpecially with rage and malice, *Acts* 26. 10, 11. *Many of the Saints did I ſhut up in priſon, having received authoritie from the chief Prieſts, and when they were put to death, I gave my voice againſt them: And I puniſh-*

* *Recolite Saulum, & invenietis Paulum; attenditis ad Paulum, & obliti eſtis Saulum; attenditis ad Paſtorem, obliti eſtis lupum.* Auguſt. *Tom.* 10. *p.* 200.

* *Nemo acrior inter Perſecutores, ergo nemo prior inter peccatores.* Auguſt. *Tom.* 10. *p.* 202.

puniſhed them oft in every Synagogue, and compelled them to blaſpheme, and being exceedingly mad againſt them, I perſecuted them even unto ſtrange cities. Where you ſee the height of iniquitie, to which nothing was wanting but a *clear knowledge*, to make it unpardonable; upon the account of which circumſtance of his ſin, he eſteems himſelf *unworthy the name of an Apoſtle*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 9. And another heightning aggravation of his ſin was, That *it was done in unbelief*, verſe 13. where ſome for, *becauſe*, read, *quamvis*, *although*, and ſo make it an aggravation of his ſin, and a further commendation of the mercy of God in pardoning; for his ignorance and unbelief, muſt needs have been in a great meaſure wilfull and affected, he enjoying the means of faith and knowledge. A high ſin queſtionleſs. *Alenſis* gives this reaſon of it, *Quia deſtruit fundamentum totius Chriſtianæ religionis*: whereas other ſins ſtrike but at ſome *particular vertue*. And beſides, if this be final, it is the *cord* which ties *all other* ſins upon the ſoul, and makes it in the event *damning*. And then, farther, as they were ſins againſt *knowledge*; the Apoſtle having been *brought up at the feet of Gamaliel*; and that's a high aggravation of ſin. *James* 4. 17. *To him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is ſin.* Now the Apoſtle eying all theſe, calls himſelf *the greateſt of ſinners*: whence obſerve a *diſtinguiſhing character* between a ſincere Chriſtian, and an hollow-hearted hypocrite: *he* extenuates and leſſens his ſin, with the *unjuſt ſteward* writing down *fiftie* for an *hundred*, but heightens his but ſeeming and pretended holineſs; the world ſhall hear of it, if the *Phariſees* faſt *twice a week*, and tithe *mint* and *cummin*: but a *ſincere humble Chriſtian* in mentioning his graces and gifts is lowly, but full and expreſs in aggravating his ſins; thus good *Hagar*, Prov. 30. 2, 3. *Surely, I am more brutiſh then any man, and have not the underſtanding of a man: I neither learned wiſdome, nor have the knowledge of the Holy.* The *Publican* ſmites upon his breaſt, with a *God be mercifull to me a ſinner*, &c. And we need go no further for an example of both, then our Apoſtle; who *of Saints* counted himſelf the *leaſt*, Epheſ. 3. 8. but here of *ſinners* the *greateſt*.

That's the ſecond.

III. *Vox eſſe accuſantis*: *The words of a ſelf-condemning and ſelf-accuſing Chriſtian.* S. *Paul's* eyes were turned inward upon his own ſins' not prying too nicely into the ſins of other men; ſo that this ſpeaks at once the Apoſtles humilitie and charitie; his charitie prompted him to think and judge better of others, though his humilitie would not ſuffer him to think otherwaies of himſelf. And here is another character of a true Chriſtian, as diſtinct from an hypo-

hypocrite: hypocrites are quick-ſighted, eagle-eyed abroad, but blinde at home. Some ſhifting off their ſins to others, nay, to God himſelf, rather then charge themſelves with them. It is an hereditarie miſcarriage, derived from our firſt parents, *Gen.* 3. 12. Another ſort *ſeemingly zealous*, and rigid in cenſuring others, never condemning themſelves, though guiltie perhaps of greater ſins, then what they ſo ſeverely cenſure in others: believe it, to cenſure uncharitably in others what we reform not in our ſelves, is but counterfeit and hypocritical. That zeal, which is ready to conſume others, and yet burns not up our *own corruptions*, is but the wilde-fire of paſſion and ſelfiſh deſign. The Phariſee, whoſe prayer was hypocriſie, would ſee oft a mote in his brothers eye, and pretend to a skill and deſire to pull it out, when he neglects the beam in his own. He that is ſo much abroad, it is to be feared he ſeldome turns his eyes inward, to conſider the plague of his own heart. The Phariſee boaſts, that he *is not as the Publican*; but the good Publican ſtrikes upon his own breaſt, and ſaith, *Lord be merciſull to me a ſinner*. It is our dutie, Brethren, to reprove others, but not uncharitably to condemn them. This *cenſorious uncharitableneſs* is commonly the iſſue of a *Phariſaical* opinion of a mans own righteouſneſs. It was otherwiſe with the diſciples, *Mark* 14.18,19. they ſay not, *Is it he?* or, *he?* but each ready to ſuſpect and accuſe himſelf, *Lord, is it I?* ſo the Apoſtle here accuſeth himſelf by a particular indictment, here in the groſs, *of whom I am the chief*. Whereas in reſpect of others, a Chriſtian thinks it better to wrong himſelf by an over *charitable credulitie*, then others by *unjuſt cenſures and ſuſpicions*, but before God none accuſe themſelves more, hereby magnifying more the *grace* of God in pardoning: *hæc ejus accuſatio eſt laus ſalvatoris*, ſaith *Ambroſe*, *accuſing himſelf he exalts his Saviour, who came into the world to ſave ſinners*, of whom he accuſeth himſelf *as the chief*.

That's the third.

IV. *Vox ſpiritualiter illuminati*: as the words of the Apoſtle *inwardly enlightned* to ſee and diſcern the nature of his former ſins; and this is one thing in which every true Chriſtian is enlightned. S. *Paul* in his unregenerate eſtate thought in his conſcience, he was bound to oppoſe the Goſpel of Chriſt, as he tells you himſelf, *Acts* 26.9. but now he diſcovers the horrid nature of his *blaſphemie*, and *perſecution*, and *unbelief*, and therefore oft heightens it, *Gal.* 1.13. *Carnal hearts* do not ſee the evil of ſin, and therefore think it a light ſmall matter; they'l be playing with the *ſerpent*, as not feeling the *ſting* of it; but when a Chriſtian *ſpiritually enlightned* ſees ſin through the *glaſs of the law*, and the *blood of Chriſt*, it appears in its proper co-

lours. Thus to S. *Paul* by the law ſin appeared *exceeding ſinfull*, Rom. 7. and himſelf here *The greateſt of ſinnners.*

That's the fourth.

V. *Vox confitentis:* as the words of S. *Paul confeſsing his ſin.* He was *primus in ordine confitentium*, ſaith *Aretius* upon the place, as readie to acknowledge his ſin as any; and ſurely this is a great Chriſtian *dutie*: however many now a-days are high-flown into raptures, and ecſtaſies, and cry down *Confeſsion* and *Repentance* as *legal.* The Saints in Scripture have been expreſs and frequent in this duty; *David* frequently in the *Pſalms*, Pſal. 32. 5. and fully, *Pſal.* 51. 2, 4, 5. confeſſes his original corruption. Read holy *Ezra's* confeſſion, *Ezra* 9. 5, 6. See *Daniels* holy and humble confeſſion, *Dan.* 9. 4. he recounts *particular* ſins, v. 5, 6. ſo continues till v. 16. thus *Paul*, v. 13. and here, *I am the chief of ſinners.* Hereby Chriſtians acknowledge their liableneſs to *Juſtice*, and magnifie the *grace* of God in pardoning, as S. *Paul*, v. 13. yet he obtained *mercy.* Much like this of the Apoſtle is that of *Tertullian*, in his book *de pœnitentia*; *Peccator omnium notarum ſum, nec ulli rei niſi pœnitentiæ natus*: that is, *I am a moſt notorious ſinner, as if I were born to no other end, then to confeſs, and repent.* That brings me to the ſixth thing, as they are,

VI. *Vox dolentis:* as the words of S. Paul *mourning and ſorrowing*, in the remembrance of his former, and meditation of his preſent ſins: *ut ſe humiliet adhuc dolet de ſua incredulitate*, ſaith *Ambroſe* upon the place; *the Apoſtle ſtill mournes upon the conſideration of his unbelief.* Though many even of thoſe, who crucified Chriſt, as thoſe *Acts* 2. were brought to a ſence of their ſin, yet none more then *Paul*, who now converted, yet grieves for his former unbelief. True Chriſtians are tender hearted, & ſo eaſily *melted* into ſorrow. It is one thing, which God workes upon the heart in *converſion*, viz. a *melting tenderneſs under ſin.* How doth *Mary Magdalen*, formerly *notorious*, ſhed a *fountain* of teares? how tender was *Davids* heart, when he had cut of *Sauls* garment, and *numbred the people*, 2. Sam. 24. 10. And Chriſtians oft mourn, (even after God hath pardoned them) that they ſhould by ſin formerly ſo much diſhonour him. I queſtion not but upon this account *David* watered his *couch* with his *tears*; and ſome ſay *Peter* never heard the *cock crow*, but he wept for the *denyal* of his Maſter: and *Auſtin* in his *confeſsions* often aggravates and heightens his ſin, while a *Manichee*; ſo the Apoſtle here reflecting upon his former *blaſphemy*, &c. ſeemes with a *tear* in his eye to cry out, *Of whom I am the chief.*

VII. *Vox ingemeſcentis ſub onere*; the Apoſtle ſpeaks this as *ſenſible of the burden of ſin*; ſo that he was *the greateſt of ſinners* in reſpect of

of his *own ſence*, and *feeling*. As ſuppoſe one ſick of the *tooth-ach*, or *head-ach*, cries out, *No pain is like my pain*, becauſe he feels that by experience, but other mens by *ſpeculation* only; ſo the Apoſtle here from an inward ſence of his own ſins calls himſelf *the chief of ſinners*. Here's again a *Character* of a *true Chriſtian*, He is one, to whom ſin is a *real* burthen, whereas a *wicked* man makes light of it, ſin is there in its proper place. A *wicked* man is in his *Element*, when ſinning, and *Elementa non gravitant in propria locis*; but a Chriſtian having a heart of *fleſh* ſo tender, the *leaſt* ſin is a *burthen* to him. *David* complains of his broken bones by reaſon of ſin: and that his ſins *were a burthen too heavie for him to bear*; and *Paul* here confeſſeth himſelf *the chief of ſinners*.

VIII. *Vox fidei applicantis*: the words of S. *Paul* by a *particular faith applying to himſelf that general truth, that Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners*. As if he ſhould have ſaid, * *I am the chief of thoſe ſinners which Chriſt came to ſave*. This is the ſpecial art of *ſaving faith*, to bring down *Univerſal* truths by *particular* application, ſo did *David*, Pſal. 116. 5, 6, 7. See, he applies the *general* mercy of God to himſelf. It is not enough to believe in the general that *Chriſt came to ſave ſinners* (for this is but *hiſtorical*, which *the divels believe, and tremble* becauſe they have no part in him, and thouſands will be damned, who profeſs they believe this:) but true *ſaving* faith is a *fiducial relyance upon, and particular application of Chriſt*, as coming to ſave *me* in particular, as S. *Paul* did, *Gal.* 2. 20. ſo, 2. *Tim.* 1. 22. and *hereafter there is layd up for me a crown*, &c. c. 4. v. 8. and here he brings down this general doctrine by a particular application to himſelf, *of whom I am the chief*.

* *Ad quos venit primus ego ſum.* Aug. *tom.* 10. *pag.* 200.

Application.

I. *See hence why this Doctrine finds no more entertainment in the world, why no more acceptable to moſt*; this is the account, they do not ſee themſelves *the chiefeſt of ſinners* but the generality are either *ſecure* in *ſin*, or elſe *reſting* upon ſome *ſelf-righteouſneſs*, and ſo Chriſt is not *valued* or *accepted*.

II. *Let ſinners hence be encouraged to come to Chriſt*: *Paul* here *the chief of ſinners* (arrived at a greater height of ſin, then 'tis likely thou haſt, viz. *blaſphemy* and *perſecution*) hath found *mercy*, which was partly for this very end, that God *oſtenderet ceteris, qui inimico tam benevolus exſtiterit, qualis eſſet futuris ad ſe decurrentibus*, ſaith *Ambroſe*. *Si Paulus ſanatus, ego quare deſpero? ut hoc dicerent homines, ideo Saulus ex perſecutore factus Apoſtolus*, ſo *Auſtin*. As a Phyſitian, when he comes firſt to a place, ventures upon the moſt deſperate patients, that they may encourage others to go to the ſame Phyſitian, ſaying; * *He cured me*, &c. No diſcouragement then to *humbled*

* *Vide plura apud Auguſt. om.* 10. *pag.* 102.

humbled ſinners from the greatneſs of their ſins; *Paul* is here a monument of mercy, and a pattern, v. 16.

III. *Take hence one ground of the Saints patience, under the reproaches and calumnies of the world:* you can ſcarce think ſo ill of them, as they do of themſelves; and therefore though they deſerve them not from you, and your accuſation is falſe, yet they can ſee God juſt in opening your mouthes to reproach them; as *David* of *curſing Shimei*, 2 *Sam.* 16. 10, 11. and ſo of *ſcoffing Michal*, 2 *Sam.* 6. 22, *I will yet be more vile.* In this Chriſtians imitate their Saviour, who, when he was reviled, anſwered not again. *Paul* was eſteemed a *babler*, a *mad-man*, a *murtherer, not worthy to live*; yet he gloried in all *reproaches*, and acknowledged himſelf *the chief of ſinners.*

IV. *See hence both the power, and the freeneſs of the grace of God*, which ſo ſuddenly made the *wolf* a *lamb*; the *chiefeſt of ſinners*, the *greateſt of the Apoſtles.* You can imagine no *deſert*, or *meritorious preparation* in a *blaſphemer*, and *perſecutour*, to the grace of God; himſelf attributes it onely to *mercy*, verſ. 13, 14. and *Gal.* 1. 13, 15.

V. *See the infinite and unſearchable abyſs of divine wiſdome*, that makes a *perſecutour* a *preacher*, and he who formerly *blaſphemed* his name, now a *choſen veſſel* to *bear* his name before the *Gentiles* and *Kings*, *Acts* 9. 13. This is beſt reſolved into Gods *abſoluteneſs*, who makes uſe of whom he will. Though it may be he choſe his Apoſtles ſome of *great ſinners*, *ut non tam voce, quàm exemplo concionarentur de gratuita remiſſione peccatorum*, as *Ægidius* notes, *That they might preach free-grace by their Examples, as well as Sermons.* As the people ſaid of the other *Saul* the King, 1 Sam. 10. 11. *Is Saul alſo among the Prophets?* ſo may we of this *Saul*, *Is he among the Apoſtles? O the depth of the wiſdome of God!* &c. *Rom.* 11. 33.

VI. *Let us all then look after this particular faith*, whereby we may receive Chriſt; reſt not upon this *general belief*, that *Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners in the groſs*; thou mayeſt *periſh* for all this; but *apply* Chriſt particularly to *thy* ſelf, as *Thomas*, *My Lord, and my God*, Joh. 20. 28. and the *Bleſſed Virgin*, Luke 1. 47. and S. *Paul*, *Who loved me*, &c. The *promiſes* of the Goſpel will be but *dry breaſts* to thee, no comfort from them, if thou draweſt not from them by the *mouth* of a *ſpecial* faith: and to believe that Chriſt *came to ſave ſinners*, will be little comfort or advantage to you, unleſs by a particular relyance you reſt on Chriſt, and by a ſpecial application receive him, as S. *Paul*, Gal. 2. and here, *of whom I am chief*; viz. of thoſe who flie to Chriſt for ſalvation, and to whom this is *an acceptable doctrine*, *That Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners, of which*, ſaith he, *I am the chief.*

FINIS.

A LOOKING-GLASS FOR MAGISTRATES.

A Sermon preached *September* 29. in *Cambridge*, at the Major's entring upon his Office.

By JOHN FROST, *B. D.* then Fellow of S. *JOHNS* Colledge, and late Preacher in *Olaves-Hartstreet* in *London.*

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JUDGES 2. 7

And the people ſerved the Lord all the days of Joſhua, and all the days of the Elders that out-lived Joſhua, who had ſeen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Iſrael.

HAd we no other argument to convince us of the neceſſitie and uſefulneſs of *Magiſtracie*, not onely for preſerving the *Peace* of the *State*, but for the ſecurity of the *Service* and *Worſhip* of God, and *protection* of *Religion*; it were ſufficient to conſider that *conſtant proviſion*, which the providence of God, watching over the Jews (then his own *peculiar* Church and people) made for *ſucceſſion* in this *Office*. For proof of which we need go no further then *Joſhua* in the Text, *Moſes* his *ſucceſſour* as well in his *Pietie* as *Government*, deſigned and appointed to it before *Moſes* his death by God himſelf, and that upon *Moſes* his requeſt, who well underſtood the neceſſity of *good Magiſtrates*, Numb. 27. 16,17. Which requeſt God granted him, and therefore commanded him to ſet apart *Joſhua* for his Succeſſour, who might perfect that work he had begun. In which ſome obſerve a *myſterie*: *That Moſes led the people out of Egypt, but Joſhua brought them into Canaan.* The *Law* may be a means to bring us out of our *natural Egyptian* bondage and darkneſs; but onely the true *Joſhua*, Jeſus Chriſt, of whom *Joſhua* was a type, can bring us to our *celeſtial Canaan*. But to omit *allegories*, I finde *Joſhua* was thrice appointed to this office. Firſt, *Deut.* 31. 7, 14. Again, *Numb.* 27. 22, 23. And then the third time after the death of *Moſes*, God himſelf giving him his *charge* and *commiſſion*, Joſh. 1. 1, 2. The end of all which was, as to give the people the greater aſſurance of Gods will in deſigning him, which might command their more ready obedience to him, ſo for the greater encouragement of *Joſhua* himſelf, to undertake with *courage* and *reſolution* thoſe great and difficult ſervices God had laid out for him, as being hereby aſſured of divine aſſiſtance to enable and carrie him through, which God himſelf ſuggeſts to *Joſhua*, Joſh. 1. 9. And as *Joſhua* received his *commiſſion* and *power* by a remarkable and immediate deſignment of God; ſo he with much *zeal* and *anſwerable ſucceſs*, managed it for the glory of God: *For the people*

ſerved the Lord all the days of Joſhua, &c. The words repreſent to us three things.

1. The *pattern* } of a *good Magiſtrate* { 1. In *Joſhua.*
2. The *influence* } { 2. *Upon Religion.*
3. The *charge* and *dutie* } { 3. To look *that the people ſerve God.* For, ſure, this was the iſſue of *Joſhuaes* zeal and pious care of *Religion*, that that people, who were ſo *ſtiff-necked*, as that they oft *murmured* and *repined* under *Moſes* government, inſomuch that *Moſes* could not ſtir up into the *Mount* to converſe with God, but preſently they fall to *idolatry*, (Exod. 32. 1, 2.) that this people ſhould for the ſpace of between twenty ſeven & twenty eight years, (for ſo long *Joſhua* ruled, by the computation of the learned *Maſius*) keep them to the *true worſhip* and *ſervice* of God, ſpake certainly his *diligent care* and zeal. Which is further evident from *verſ.* 11, 12, 13. where we read that *Joſhua* was no ſooner *dead*, but the people fall to *idolatry*, and *ſerving Baal*, and *Aſhtaroth*, in ſtead of ſerving God. Theſe three *particulars* ſhall bound my diſcourſe and your patience.

Firſt, for the *pattern* of a good Magiſtrate, *Joſhua*. And ſo he may be in theſe nine particulars.

I. *His reſolved piety*, which you may read, *Joſh.* 24. 15. Thus when God bad *Moſes* to ſet apart *Joſhua* for this office, he deſcribed him thus, *Numb.* 27. 18. *A man in whom is the Spirit*; not onely the *Spirit* of *government*, but of *ſanctification* and *holineſs:* and ſuch ſhould all Magiſtrates be, *Men fearing God.* Such *Jethro*, though an *Heathen*, would have *Moſes* chooſe, *Exod.* 18. 21. That accurſed *Machiavel* allows a *ſhadow* and *appearance* of Religion as uſefull unto Magiſtrates, but the *power* and *realitie* pernicious. A *principle* perhaps ſuiting with the *deſigns* of a *carnal Politician*, but not of a *Chriſtian Magiſtrate*, who lies under all poſſible *obligations* to the *reality* of *Religion* and *Piety*. If there were nothing elſe, the law of an *ingenuous gratitude* challengeth this, as conſidering that *promotion cometh neither from the Eaſt, nor from the Weſt, nor from the South: But God is the Judge; he putteth down one, and ſetteth up another*, Pſal. 75. 6, 7. Therefore conſidering that *the powers that be are ordained of God*, Rom. 13. 1. it muſt needs engage him to the pious ſervice of that God, from whom he derives his power. But, beſides this, there are many other weightie engagements to this *real pietie*; as the *command* of God, *Pſalm* 2. 10, 11. and the *pious examples* of good Magiſtrates. *David*, a *man after Gods own heart*, *danced* before the *Ark*, 2 *Sam.* 6. 20. Some think this intimated, *Joſh.* 1. 1. where *Joſhua* is called *Moſes* his *Miniſter*, to note (ſaith *Ferus*) that none is fit to be a Magiſtrate and to *rule*

Acts 13 22.

others

others by his laws, but he, who hath firſt learned *obedience* to the *Law of God*; *Niſi qui priùs legi Dei ſe ſubjecerit.* Add to theſe the *titles* Scripture gives to Magiſtrates, who are called *Gods*, Pſal. 82. 1. They have the ſtampe of his authority, and ſhould therefore bear the image of his holineſs. They are called *Fathers*, Job 25. 16. which is *Nomen pietatis & poteſtatis*, ſaith *Tertullian*: an engagement to piety as well as a title of authoritie; and ſpeakes their duty to be above the people in holineſs as well as honour, in goodneſs as well as greatneſs. Beſides, piety and Religion is neceſſary in a Magiſtrate, that he may (as he ought) rule in the fear of God, as *David* ſaith, 2 *Sam.* 23. 3. This will make him juſt to others, humble in himſelf, faithfull in the diſcharge of his calling and particular truſt, conſcientious in his actions: and it will keep Magiſtracie from degenerating into Tyranny, command the peoples obedience, and beget in them reverence and awfull reſpects to their Superiours, and promote the happineſs and ſecurity of Government; moſt of which you have excellently expreſſed, *Deut.* 17. 10. Beſides, there is no ſuch cement and ſure tie of affections and love between Magiſtrate and people, as Religion is: none ſo fit to rule others as thoſe, in whoſe ſouls piety and the fear of God rules and beares ſway. Obſerve what *Moſes* ſaith to the people, *Deut.* 1. 13. *Take ye wiſemen and underſtanding, and known among your tribes*; known for Religion and *the fear of God.* The great duty of Magiſtrates is to appear againſt, and diſcountenance ſin in others, which an ungodly Magiſtrate will never do to the purpoſe. Nothing makes publick perſons more fearfull to appear againſt ſin in others, (whether Miniſters in reproving, or Magiſtrates in puniſhing) then guilt at home, fearing leſt, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Rom.* 2. 1. *wherein they judge others, they ſhould condemn themſelves, ſeeing they themſelves do the ſame things.* But if all this prevail not, if neither the honour of God, nor their own good; yet tenderneſs and pity to the people under them ſhould prevail upon them to be religious, leſt their ſins involve the people in publick miſery, as the ſins of Magiſtrates oft do: *Quicquid delirant Reges*, &c. Seventy thouſand of the people died for *Davids* ſin in numbring them, 2. Sam. 24. 15. Therefore if Magiſtrates regard either Gods glory, their own happineſs, or their peoples ſafety, they muſt write after *Joſhuaes* copy, viz. piety towards God. That is the firſt: as parts of, or helps to this piety,

II. *His diligent ſtudy of the word of God.* For queſtionleſs, what was Gods command to him was his practiſe, and that ye may ſee, *Joſhua* 1. 8. An excellent employment, a moſt proper exerciſe for a Chriſtian Magiſtrate; which therefore we have under the divine

command, *Deut.* 17. 18, 19. The Magiſtrates power is not abſolute and arbitrary, but limited and contracted; and the exerciſe of this power ſhould be anſwerable to, and regulated by the rule of the word of God: not by emergencies of State, or the like, but by the word. Their laws are unjuſt, their power is pernicious, their commands tyrannical; if the one enact, or the other impoſe a thing contrary to the word. It was the juſt commendation of *Alphonſus* king of *Arragon*, that *he converſed much with the word of God*, which he peruſed *ten times* over with a *Comment*. It is the Magiſtrates dutie to maintain and propagate the true worſhip and ſervice of God, as I ſhall ſhew more anon. But how to diſtinguiſh the *true worſhip* and *ſervice* of God from *idolatry* or *ſuperſtitious worſhip* can be known onely by the *word* of God, in which God hath laid down a platform and Idea of the true manner how he will be worſhipped.

III. *Prayer and devotion to God.* God when he gave *Joſhua* his charge, *Joſh.* 1. 2. bad him *Ariſe*, &c. *Surge. Videtur Joſhua in oratione jacuiſſe*, ſaith *Ferus* upon the place. *Proſtration* was then the uſual poſture of *prayer*. A duty well becoming a Chriſtian Magiſtrate; which *David* knew well, and therefore reſolves *Evening, and morning*, and *at noon* to *pray*, and *cry aloud unto God*, Pſal. 55. 17. It is reported of *Charles the fifth*, that he was ſo frequent in his devotion, that his Courtiers were wont to ſay, *Quòd ſapiùs cum Deo, quàm cum hominibus loqueretur, That he converſed more with God, then with men.* And truly, they who ſeriouſly conſider the burthen of Magiſtracy, and (through the turbulency, diſquiet, and unrulineſs of many ſpirits) the difficulty of managing it, and how much wiſdome and prudence is required to it, and withall that all the enablements, and aſſiſtances to go through it, come from above from God, will eaſily ſee, that prayer and devotion is neceſſary to a Magiſtrate. Magiſtrates ſhould be men of knowledge and underſtanding; as it is ſaid of *David*, that *he was wiſe as an Angel of God*, 2 *Sam.* 14. 20. *Moſes* bid the people ſeek out *men of knowledge* and *underſtanding* to be *Rulers* over them, *Deut.* 1. 13. The way to come by this wiſdome is *prayer*: which *Solomon* was ſenſible of, when being put to his choiſe what to ask, he prayed for *wiſdome*, 1 *Kings* 3. 9. The ſame his father *David* had prayed for for him before, 1 *Chron.* 22. 12. *The Lord give thee wiſdome and underſtanding*: both to govern thy ſelf and others. And the Apoſtle bids expreſſely thoſe, who *want wiſdome, to ask it of God*, Jam. 1. 5. And if ever this were needfull, then now certainly in our days. A *skilfull Pilot* and *Mariner* is moſt required in a ſtorm, when the boiſterous tumultuous *waves* threaten a *ſhip-wrack*: and *wiſe* and *skilfull* Magiſtrates

Gerard. pag. 786.

giſtrates, to ſecure the Church from *ſplitting* upon the *rock* of *error* and *hereſie*, or the State of *Anarchy* and *confuſion*.

4. *His courage and reſolution to undertake any ſervice for God, though upon the greateſt improbabilities, and moſt difficult diſadvantages.* If he ſends him againſt *Jericho*, onely with *Rams-horns*, he undertakes it. This God oft urgeth upon *Joſhua*, Joſh. 1. 18. *Onely be ſtrong, and of a good courage.* A good qualification of a Chriſtian Magiſtrate; *Courage*, to *ſtand up for God*, and *Courage* to *appear* againſt ſin: *Courage* to *bear up* againſt reproaches and calumnies of men (for theſe you muſt look to meet with) that you *be not afraid of the face of man*, Deut. 1. 17. *Alexander* was wont to ſay, that this was *verè regium*, well becoming Authoritie *to do well, and to hear ill*: ſuch a *Courage* and equal *greatneſs* and *magnanimitie* of ſpirit becomes a Magiſtrate, as may neither be over-heightned by anger and paſſion, which oft makes Magiſtracie degenerate into a cruel *Tyrannie*; nor yet emaſculated and weakned by timorous low fearfulneſs, which may cauſe him to pervert juſtice, whileſt he fears either the Malefactours greatneſs, or his own diſgrace and inconvenience. *Solomon's* Throne was upheld by Lions. A Lions heart upholds the Magiſtrates power and authoritie; whileſt a baſe puſillanimous cowardize betraies his Government to *contempt*, his perſon to *reproach*, and encourageth the people (whileſt through his cowardize they promiſe themſelves impunitie) to *confidence* in ſin & prophaneneſs. It was a brave reſolution of *David* (which if all Magiſtrates, as it is their dutie, ſhould take up, we ſhould not ſee ſuch an overflowing of open prophaneneſs) *Pſal.* 101. 7,8. *He that worketh deceit*, &c.

V. *The milde and ſweet tenderneſs of his Government.* He rather choſe to lead the people, then to drive them; to perſwade, then to force them. An inſtance of this you have, *Joſh.* 1. 12,13,14. *&c.* He might by his power have commanded and compelled them, or elſe juſtly ſtript and deprived them of that poſſeſſion, which was allotted them by *Moſes*, which was onely upon condition of their *obedience* in paſſing *Jordan*, Numb. 32. 29,30. But ſee, he choſe rather friendly to *admoniſh and intreat* them; and ſee the fruit of it, it overcame the people into obedience, *Joſh.* 1. 16,17. And no wonder *Joſhua* was ſo tender and gentle, being inſtructed and educated by *Moſes*, the *meekeſt man upon the face of the earth*, Num. 12. 3. A fit temper ſure of a Chriſtian Magiſtrate, as being that by which theſe *God's of the earth* reſemble the *God of heaven*. This is it which *preſerves and ſecures Government*, Prov. 20. 28. The reaſon ſure is, becauſe nothing doth ſo *powerfully*, yet ſo *ſweetly command* the peoples *obedience*. Thus *Abſalom* ſtole away the hearts of the people

people of Iſrael, 2 *Sam.*15.5. Whileſt a moroſe imperious *cruelty* exaſperates mens minds, and makes them *tumultous* and *rebellious*; a ſweet milde *clemencie* makes them *facile* and *flexible*. Hiſtorians obſerve, that the cruelty of *Nero*, *Vitellius*, *Domitian*, *Heliogabalus* & others betrayed them to haſtie and violent deaths, whileſt the *ſweetneſs* and *clemencie* of *Trajan*, *Auguſtus*, *Adrianus*, and *Titus Veſpaſian* (who was hence called *deliciæ humani generis*) cauſed their *longer life*, and more honourable and *natural death*. *Pliny* tells us that the king of the *Bees* hath *no ſting*: a Magiſtrate ſhould be of ſuch an equal temper, that neither by an *overmuch facilitie* he might encourage ſin, nor yet by a too *ſevere crueltie* oppreſs and tyrannize.

Bellarm.p.95.

VI. *His Vigilancie and watchfulneſs*: of which we have an inſtance, *Joſh.* 3.1. *And Joſhua roſe early in the morning, &c.* A *duty*, which lies much upon Magiſtrates: *Continual dangers* attend them, & *difficulties* offer themſelves to them: & they muſt be watchfull, leſt, whileſt they ſleep, the *enemie* comes and *ſows tares*, the *Tares* of *Hereſie* in the Church, or *Faction* and *Sedition* in the State. Οὐ χὴ παννύχον εὕδειν βουληφόρον ἄνδρα, *It becomes not a Magiſtrate to ſleep a whole night*, the Heathen could ſay. The Apoſtle exhorts them who rule, that *they ſhould do it with diligence*, ἐν σπουδῇ, Rom.12.8. Magiſtrates would do well to conſider *whoſe work* they are imployed in, *viz. the work of God*. His Deputies they are, and therefore may tremble to think of that, *Jer.*48.10. *Curſed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully*, or, *negligently*, as it is in the Margent; and this may provoke them to care and vigilancie in their duty.

*Mat.*13.25.

Hom.Iliad.β.

VII. *His care in the execution of juſtice*: carefully enquiring into the cauſe, before he paſſed ſentence. A pregnant inſtance of which we have, *Joſh.*7. in his dealing with *Achan*: how he ſearched, firſt into the *Tribes*, then into the *Families*, then into the *houſholds*, till at laſt he found the *perſon*? Then he was as juſt and ſevere in puniſhing, as he had been diligent and carefull in enquiring. This becomes all Magiſtrates in the execution of juſtice, not to paſs a *raſh judgement* through a precipitate haſt or paſſion; but to ſearch out the truth of the cauſe, by which means they may come, neither to ſpare or countenance the ſin, nor yet to wrong the perſon. God himſelf hath ſet Magiſtrates a pattern in this: before he would pour fire and brimſtone upon *Sodom*, Gen.18.21. *I will go down now, and ſee whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me: and if not, I will know.* Which is ſpoke *after the manner of men*. This God commands Magiſtrates, *Deut.* 1.16. *Hear the cauſes between your brethren, and judge righteouſly,*

teouſly, &c. And again, *Deut.* 17.4. *And it be told thee, and thou haſt heard of it, and enquired diligently, and, behold, it be true,* &c. This was the cuſtome of the *Romanes*, Acts 25.16. not to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accuſed have the accuſers face to face, and have licence to anſwer for himſelf concerning the crime laid againſt him. Magiſtrates ſhould be indeed blinde to the perſon, but ſeeing into the cauſe.

VIII. *His conſulting the Prieſt of God, and asking and taking his direction:* which was God's command, and his practiſe, *Num.*27. 21. *And he ſhall ſtand before Eleazar the Prieſt, who ſhall ask counſel for him after the judgement of Urim before the Lord: at his word ſhall they go out, and at his word they ſhall come in, both he and all the children of Iſrael with him, even all the congregation.* This was the practiſe of good Magiſtrates of old, as *Jehoſaphat* asked counſel of *Micaiah*, 1 Kings 22.5. *David* of *Nathan*: *Hezechiah* of *Iſaiah*, 2 Kings 19.2. *Theodoſius* of S. *Ambroſe*: and it would ſpeak the humilitie and the pietie of the Magiſtrates to do ſo ſtill. This good and advantage we ſhould likely finde by it, that Magiſtrates would rule more according to *the word of God*, and be leſs acted by *carnal intereſts*, and *worldly policies* and *deſigns*.

IX. And laſtly, *His publick-ſpiritedneſs; his minding the common intereſt, and preferring the publick good of the people before his private advantage.* A ſignal inſtance of which we have in *dividing the land*, Joſh. 19.49. *When they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by their coaſts, the children of Iſrael gave an inheritance to Joſhua the ſon of Nun among them.* He might have taken firſt, and the greater part too; but he prefers the peoples good before his own. This excellently ſuits with a good Magiſtrate, who ſhould not ſeek great things for himſelf, or to exalt himſelf, or promote his own intereſt; but to carrie on the publick good and concernment. It was good counſel which the Philoſopher gave *Alexander* his ſcholar, *That he ſhould undertake the government,* μὴ εἰς ὕβριν, ἀλλὰ εἰς εὐεργεσίαν: *Not for his own honour ſo much, as for the peoples good.* And the ſame Philoſopher makes this diſtinction between a good and a bad Magiſtrate, Ὁ μὲν γὰρ τὸ ἑαυτῷ συμφερὸν σκοπεῖ, ὁ βασιλεὺς τὸ τῶν ἀρχομένων, *A bad Magiſtrate ſeeks his own, a good one the peoples good and profit.* When God promiſed *Moſes*, Exod. 32. 10, 11. to make of him *a great nation*, but would *deſtroy Iſrael*; he had no minde to that preferment upon thoſe terms. Nothing more contrary to the nature of the Magiſtrates office, which was appointed by God for the good of others, nothing more deſtructive to the publick, then private intereſt and baſe ſelf-ſeeking, unworthy of a Chriſtian, and more of a Magiſtrate, the very

Dicteric. p. 723.

Ariſt. Ethic. lib. 8. *cap.* 10.

very end of whoſe office is the publick good.

Secondly, *The influence of a good Magiſtrate*; which he may have,

I. *By his good and religious example.* Examples are very prevalent, and of great force with moſt men: and by this *Joſhua* promoted the *ſervice of God*, Joſh. 24.24. You may ſee the peoples reſolution to *ſerve the Lord*, which was ſure the iſſue of *Joſhua's* reſolve, *verſe* 15. *But as for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord.* Therefore *Origen*, after his uſual manner, allegorizing upon this place, interprets *all the days of Joſhua, all the vertues of Joſhua*, as *Juſtitia, Miſericordia*, &c. whom *Hugo* and *Lyra* follow. The examples of great ones, of men in place and authority, do powerfully encline others, whether to good or bad, to ſin or holineſs. Obſerve what the Wiſeman ſaith, *Prov.* 29. 12. *If a ruler hearken to lies, all his ſervants are wicked.* As it is ſaid of *Iſrael*, that *their leaders made them to erre*, Eſay. 9. 16. This was the account of the *Phariſees* rejecting Chriſt, *John* 7. 48. *Have any of the rulers believed on him?* Thus the Iſraelites wrote after the copie of *Solomons Idolatrie*, 1 Kings 11. 5, 7, 33. How is *Jeroboam* branded with this, that *he made Iſrael to ſin*, viz. the example and preſident of his Idolatrie? 1 *Kings* 14. 16. Their Religion or Idolatrie ebbed and flowed according to the temper of their Kings. S. *Auguſtine* ſpeaking of that youth in *Terence*, who was encouraged to the ſin of Adulterie by the example of their God *Jupiter*, meditates thus, *Vide quemadmodum ſe concitat ad libidinem cæleſti quodam Magiſtro*: ſo men are emboldned by the ſins of Magiſtrates to commit the ſame as they, whom Scripture calleth *God's*. There is a kinde of Soveraingtie in the examples of great ones over mens lives and actions; and, as *Lactantius* notes, men account it, *Obſequii quoddam genus Regis vitia imitari*; and therefore caſt of all pietie, *nè Regi ſcelus exprobrare viderentur*, leſt *their contrarie vertues might ſeem to upbraid their Governours vices.* Therefore Magiſtrates upon this account are engaged to the ſervice of God, leſt they incur the guilt of other mens ſins, and by their example countenance thoſe ſins, which by their ſword of juſtice they ſhould puniſh. Wickedneſs invalidates the Magiſtrates authority, and weakens his hands in the execution of juſtice, and encourageth ſin in others; as the *Egyptians* eſteemed it gracefull and their dutie, to halt on that legge on which their King limped. On the contrary, a Magiſtrates religious example provokes piety in others. This makes Religion glorious and lovely in the eyes of others, when it ſhines with the rays of greatneſs and Majeſtie. *David*, by his liberal contribution to the building of the Temple, provokes the people to a *willing benevolence*,

Auguſt. Conf. lib. 1. cap. 16.

Lactan. inſtit. l. 5. c. 6.

lence, 1 Chron. 29. 6,7. *&c.* The *Ninevites* humble themſelves by the example of their king, *Jonah* 3.6. There may perhaps be ſomething to this purpoſe in that expreſſion, *Hagg.* 2. 23. where God ſaith of *Zerubbabel*, that *he will make him as a ſeal*, or *a ſignet*, to intimate the care and account God makes of good Magiſtrates, as men do of a Ring or Seal, he hath them continually in his hand; ſee, what an impreſſion Great-ones may make upon the people, and how readily the people will receive that Signature and impreſſion of Holineſs, which they ſee engraven upon their Governours and Superiours. This then may engage Magiſtrates to Holineſs, that they may go before others in a holy life. It was the honour of that *Romane Ceſar*, that he was never heard to ſay, *Ite Milites*, but *Venite Commilitones.*

——*Ignave, venire*
Te Cæſar, non ire jubet.——

A moſt prevalent courſe: for this makes the people conceive of the Magiſtrates commands as equal and reaſonable, when they ſee Holineſs and Religion, not onely enacted by their laws, but legible in their lives.

That's the firſt.

II. *By puniſhing ſin.* Herein appeared *Joſhua's* zeal, in cauſing *Achan* to be ſtoned, *Joſhua* 7. 25. This is part of the Commiſſion God hath given you; to this end he hath put a Sword into your hand, *Rom.* 13. 4, 6. and 1 *Pet.* 2. 14. Magiſtrates ſhould puniſh ſin without fear or favour, by *an impartial execution* of the Laws, as for *Sabbath breaking* (a reigning ſin) *ſwearing*, *drunkenneſs*, &c. Nor be *Gallioes*, when theſe ſins are brought before you, *You care for none of theſe things*, Acts 18. 17. Magiſtrates ſhould be zealous in puniſhing *Firſt-Table-ſins*; for the *Second-Table-ſins*, ſuch as Thefts, Murders, and the like, are the iſſue and birth of *Atheiſme*, *Swearing*, *Sabbath-breaking*, &c. as, I ſuppoſe, you have heard men, when brought to ſuffer (then we may judge them moſt ſerious) crying out of their Sabbath-breaking, as that which brought them to it.

Thus a Magiſtrate may promote the ſervice of God, by puniſhing Irreligion and Profaneneſs, *&c.*

III. *By countenancing and encouraging the godly*; *viz.* thoſe who deſire to *walk ſtrictly with*, and attend the *publick ſervice and Ordinances of God.* Thus did *David*, Pſal. 101. 6. *Mine eyes ſhall be upon the faithfull of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he ſhall ſerve me.*

IV. *By upholding the publick worſhip of God, and bringing the people to the publick Ordinances.* Thus did *Joſhua*, if we credit *Brentius*,

tius, who gives this as the reaſon, why wickedneſs prevailed ſo much after *Joſhua's* death, *Quia poſt Joſhuam miniſterium collapſum erat.* Then the Ordinances and Miniſtry were neglected; upon which followed Atheiſme, and contempt of God, and that let in an inundation of Profaneneſs. I know Religion is an act of the minde and ſoul, and ſo not liable to any outward reſtraint, but is onely ſubject to him, who hath an abſolute command and Soveraigntie over the conſcience: but conformitie to an *outward worſhip* may be commanded by a Superiour, without any Tyrannie over conſcience, or infringement of Chriſtian libertie. I know the Spirit of God can onely put them in, but, I believe, it is the Magiſtrates dutie and charge to ſee them brought to the pool.

V. *By protecting and countenancing the Miniſtry of the word of God, and the publick preaching of the Goſpel.* Magiſtrates are compared to *Gates* in Scripture, *Ruth* 3. 11. intimating their dutie to *let in*, and give a *paſſage* to the Goſpel. Then the Church and State is like to flouriſh, ſin diſcountenanced, Religion propagated, when *Moſes* and *Aaron* go hand in hand together; the Magiſtrate to correct ſin, the Miniſter to reprove; when the Magiſtrate makes uſe of the Miniſters direction, and the Miniſter enjoys the Magiſtrates protection. It is ſaid of good king *Jehoſaphat*, that *he ſent princes to teach in the cities of Judah*, 2 Chron. 17.7. not that they did publickly diſpenſe the word; for they had Levites with them, *verſe* 8. and they *taught*, verſe 6. But they were ſent to *provide for*, and *countenance* the Levites in that office; and this is certainly the Chriſtian Magiſtrates duty, to protect the Miniſters of the Goſpel,

Read Theodoret, l. 1. c. 2.

1. *In their repute and credit:* leſt the Goſpel come to be ſcorned; as we have found by lamentable experience; that, ſince the Embaſſadours of the Goſpel have been diſreſpected, and opprobries of ignorant men caſt upon them to cloud their credit; the Goſpel hath been undervalued, errours multiplied, the Scriptures queſtioned and vilified: and, I fear, the Magiſtrates will ſcarce waſh their hands from much guilt of all this.

2. *In their maintenance and juſt rights. Famem miniſtrorum ſequitur Fames verbi*, as *Luther* long ſince foretold, *That famiſhing the Miniſters would uſher in a Famine of the word.* And if ever the maintenance of the Miniſtry comes to be arbitrary, we ſhould have none but *Micha's* Levites, who ſerve for ten *ſhekels* by the year, and *a ſuit of apparel*, and his *victuals*. This is Scripture, *Judg.* 17. 10. And if you mark the circumſtance of the ſtory, it was when there was *no king in Iſrael*, &c. *verſ.* 6. And that will befall the Miniſters, which

which God threatned as a curſe upon *Elie's* houſe, 1 *Sam.* 2. 36. *And it ſhall come to paſs, that every one that is left in thine houſe ſhall come and crouch to him for a piece of ſilver, and a morſel of bread, and ſhall ſay, Put me, I pray thee, into one of the Prieſts offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.* Would you account him a friend to the *childe*, that ſhould ſtarve the *nurſe*, that ſhe can give no *milk* to it? no better friends are they (pretend what they will) who would *ſtarve* the Miniſters, and ſo *rob* the people of the *ſincere milk of the word*, by which they ſhould *grow*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. This Scripture ſpeaks of as the badge of *bad* Magiſtrates. A perſecuting *Ahab*, that counted *Elijah* the *troubler of Iſrael*, 1 *Kings* 18. (the language of too many now adays) and thoſe ungodly Princes, who caſt *Jeremy* into the *dungeon*, Jer. 37. 15. Good *Hezekiah* was of another ſpirit and temper. See his remarkable *zeal*, 2 *Chron.* 31. 2. that the people might not want the ſervice of God: and *verſ.* 4. he orders the *Prieſts* and *Levites* maintenance, that they might neither want *ſubſiſtence* nor *encouragement*. A *good pattern* for *good* Magiſtrates, who deſire to promote the *worſhip* and *ſervice* of God.

VI. *By building or repairing the places of Gods worſhip and ſervice.* Thus we finde *David* both by his example and entreaty prepare for the *building* of the *Temple*, 1 *Chron.* 29. 2, 3. *Solomon* building it. It was *Davids* trouble, and that which he looked upon as an abſurdity, that he ſhould live in an *Houſe* of *Cedars*, and the *Ark of God* remain within *curtains*, 2 *Sam.* 7. 2. Thus *Joas*, 2 *King.* 12. 5, 6, 7, 8. *Joſiah*, 2 *King.* 22. 3, 4, 5. took care for repairing it. And it ſpoke the *pious* care of *Conſtantine*, that after the Church was come out of thoſe ten furious perſecutions, he cauſed the *Idol Temples* to be ſhut up, and the *Chriſtian Churches* demoliſhed by *Dioclesian* to be reedified. And this piece of promoting the ſervice of God you are not ignorant how your Magiſtrate, now in being, hath imitated in reedifying that place of worſhip formerly famous for *Perkins* and others; which as you cannot without ingratitude but acknowledge as a teſtimony of his affection to your *town* (thus they argued of their *centurion* to Chriſt, *Luke* 7. 5. *For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a Synagogue*) ſo we cannot without uncharitableneſs but apprehend it, as a good preſage of his future *zeal* in his Government for promoting and upholding the *true worſhip* and ſervice of God.

VII, And laſtly, *The influence* of a good Magiſtrate will appear, if we conſider *the ſad effects of the want of Magiſtracy*. For which I ſhall lead you no further then this Church of the *Jews*: read at your leiſure the five laſt Chapters of this book of *Judges*, where you may ſee the ſinfull and miſerable eſtate of the Jews, when there

was *no King in Iſrael*; not onely outrages and filthy abominations abounding, as the abuſing of the *Levites Concubine* unto death, Chap. 19. But alſo Irreligion and Idolatry in the Church, *Micah* makes himſelf Idols, and an Ephod and Teraphim, and conſecrates one of his ſons for his *Prieſt*, Chap. 17. 5. and then the cauſe of all this is expreſſely ſet down, ver. 6. *In thoſe days there was no King in Iſrael, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.* It is controverted what time all this fell out: *Ioſephus* is of opinion, that this Idolatry fell out preſently after *Ioſhuaes* death, before there was either *Judge* or *King* in *Iſrael*. And you may obſerve how the *Religion* of *Iſrael* decayed upon the loſs of a good Magiſtrate; as after the death of *Gideon*, Judg. 8.33. and after the death of *Ioſhua* in this Chapter, *ver.* 11, 12. who, whileſt he lived, had ſuch an influence upon them, that *the people ſerved the Lord all the days of Ioſhua:* and that's the ſecond thing; *The influence of a good Magiſtrate upon Religion.*

Ferus, p.472.

Thirdly, *The charge and duty of a good Magiſtrate,*

To uphold religion and the worſhip of God: which muſt bee underſtood,

I. Not of the *immediate exerciſe* of the *publick worſhip* of God, as *preaching* or *adminiſtring the Sacraments*. This is not the Magiſtrates *duty*, as *Theodoret* tells us of *Theodoſius* the Emperour; who when he would come to have encroached upon ſome *acts* of *worſhip* peculiar onely to the Prieſt, S. *Ambroſe* made him this anſwer, Ἀλυργὶς βασιλέας ἀχ ἱερέας ποιεῖ· *His ſcarlet made him a Magiſtrate, not a Miniſter.* Theſe are acts of *office* and belonging to Miniſters, as a *peculiar* and *diſtinct function* from Magiſtracy. Therefore for them to engage in theſe, is but ἀλλοτριοεπισκοπεῖν, to be *buſy-bodies* in other mens matters. But

Theodoret. l. 5. cap. 16, 17.

II. *Their charge is to uphold the Ordinances, and to propagate and countenance the publick worſhip of the true God, and preaching of his word. Iehoiadah*, when he anointed *Ioaſh*, gave him the *Book of the law* to keep, 2 *King.* 11.12. as minding him of his duty in taking care for *Religion* and the *worſhip of God.* This is that which was propheſied of *Goſpel-times*, *Eſay.* 49. 23. *Kings ſhall be thy Nurſing-Fathers, and their Queens thy Nurſing-Mothers*, &c. And in diſcountenancing all falſe worſhip of God. This hath been the conſtant practiſe, and the deſerved glory and praiſe of good Magiſtrates: as it was the glory of *Iehoſhaphat*, that he ſent out *Levites* to preach in Judah, and Princes to protect and countenance them: as you read, 2 *Chron.* 17. 7, 8. *Non enim uſurpârunt ſibi functionem alienam*, ſaith *Lavater*. Therefore they did not preach; but through the *zeal* of that good Magiſtrate were ſent to provide, that the word

Lavater. in locum.

word of God might be upheld by the civil authority. So he that ſhall read, 2 *Kings.* 23. will evidently ſee *Joſiahs* care for *Religion* in his deſtroying *Idolatry*, and providing for *the teaching of the law*. *Hezekiah* provides for *the keeping of the Paſſover*, 2 *Chron.* 30. 1. *Darius* makes a *publick edict*, that *the God of Daniel onely ſhould be worſhipped*, Dan. 6. 26. And, to name no more, *Joſhua* here: what care did he take for *the worſhip of God?* See, how he exhorts the people to it, *Joſh.* 24. 14. And this is the duty of every good Magiſtrate upon a fourfold account.

1. *To ſecure the peoples obedience.* Obſerve how *ready an obedience* the people gave to *Joſhua*, Joſh. 1. 17. *According as we hearkned unto Moſes in all things, ſo we will hearken unto thee*, &c. And truly, I think, there is no more effectual means to keep the people in *obedience*, then to uphold the *Ordinances*. For the word of God, where it *converts* not, it oft *civilizeth*, and layes a reſtraint and curbe upon mens Spirits. It takes cognizance of, and reproves, and cenſures thoſe ſins (inward *lurking ſins*) which the *civil ſword* cannot reach. *Si vis omnia tibi ſubjicere, ſubjice rationi*, ſaith *Seneca*: I will ſay *Pietati*. They will be more readily ſubject to the Magiſtrate, who are kept in ſubjection to and compliance with the *Ordinances* of God. It was a notable trial which *Conſtantine* made of his ſubjects: He pretended, that thoſe who would ſacrifice to the *Idol gods*, ſhould ſecure their *preferments* at Court; and thoſe who refuſed, ſhould forthwith be *baniſhed* and ſtript of their preferment. A great part (not knowing the Emperours deſign) complyed with the Heathens *Idolatry*; whom preſently the good Emperour cauſed to be excluded from the Court, giving this reaſon of it, Πῶς βασιλεῖ πίστν φυλάξαι, &c. *How ſhall they ever keep their fidelity to me, who have already caſt off their religion to God.* And our own ſad experience tells us (he is wilfully blinde, that ſees it not) that the Magiſtrates have no greater enemies, then thoſe, who have thrown off the *publick Ordinances* and *ſervice* of God, and are crept into houſes. Their pretence is againſt the Miniſtry, but they are enemies to the Magiſtracy. As I am informed, ſome ſcattered papers have been in this Town to that effect: and they can ſpit damnation in the Magiſtrates, as well as in the Miniſters faces. They pretend to be onely againſt bad Magiſtrates, and they would have the *civil ſword* onely in the hands of the *Saints*; but then the next thing is, they muſt be accounted the onely *Saints*; ſo that the deſign is, either no Magiſtracy at all, or elſe they are the onely *Saints* (forſooth) muſt have it. And truely this would be no other then to put the *ſword* into *mad-mens* hands.

Seneca, Epiſt. 17.

Euſeb. l. 1. *c.* 11. *de vita Conſtant.*

2. *To preſerve the peace and ſafetie of the Nation.* This is the Magiſtrates

giſtrates duty, called therefore *Sheilds*, Pſal. 47. 10. and *Foundations*, Pſal. 82. 5. Both ſpeak *defence* and *protection*. Which, ſure, is moſt effectually conſulted by upholding the *publick Ordinances* and *worſhip* of God. The two pillars *Jachin* and *Boaz* (that is, *Eſtabliſhment* and *ſtrength*) proceeded from the *Temple*, 1 *Kings* 7. 21. The *true worſhip* of God is the Nations *ſecurity*. The *Philoſopher* among thoſe things, without which a Common-wealth cannot long ſubſiſt, reckons περὶ τὸ θεῖον ἐπιμέλειαν, *The care of Religion*. *Troy* was ſafe, while the *Palladium* was preſerved; but when in the *Trojan-war* that was taken, the citie ſoon after was ſtormed. While Magiſtrates endeavour to keep up the *publick exerciſes* of *Religion*, they do the State the beſt ſervice that can be. Thus they intereſt *God* and his *providence*; his *glory* is wound up in their *good*, ſo long as Religion is conſulted. *Livie* tells us it was a *cuſtome* of the *Romanes*, when they beſieged any city, *Quibuſdam ſacris evocare genios loci tutelares, nè eorum conatibus obſtent*; *To endeavour to get out their tutelar gods, leſt they ſhould hinder their deſign*. *Religion* and the *ſervice* of God is the *protection* of the Nation. *Socrates* ſaith, that any one who conſiders it may eaſily obſerve, Συνακμάσαντα τότε δημοσίᾳ κακὰ, καὶ τὰ περὶ ἐκκλησιῶν δυσχερῆ: That *the ſame miſeries fell together both upon Church and State*. The *Peace* of the one, and the *Religion* of the other, ebbed and flowed together. Sometimes diſorders in the State uſher'd in irreligion in the Church; and irreligion in the Church oftner brought confuſion upon the State. And this Scripture ſpeaks. Obſerve but how it fared with *Iſrael*, *Judg.* 5. 8. *They choſe new gods, then was war in the gates*, &c. That's a notable place, 2 *Chron.* 15. 3. *For a long ſeaſon Iſrael hath been without the true God, and without a teaching Prieſt, and without Law*. See the *decay* of Religion: and *verſ.* 6. read the ſad event of it, *And Nation was deſtroyed of Nation, and citie of citie: for God did vex them with all adverſitie*. The *Calves* at *Dan* and *Bethel*, which *Jeroboam* thought good policie to ſet up for the ſecurity of his kingdome, proved it's ruine, and betrayed his kingdome to the *Aſſyrians*, 2 *Kings* 17. Certainly Religion is the beſt policie to preſerve and ſecure the bleſſing of God upon a Nation. How did God bleſs the houſe of *Obed-Edom* while the *Ark* remained with him? 2 *Sam.* 6. 12. and *Pharaoh* for *Joſephs* ſake, *Gen.* 39. 5. So *Micah*, *Judg.* 17. 13. *Now know I that the Lord will do me good, ſeeing I have a Levite to my Prieſt*. So the *publick Ordinances* and *Miniſtry* are the beſt *bleſſings* to a Nation. As *Eliſha* ſaid, when he ſaw *Elijah* taken from him; *O my Father! The chariots of Iſrael, and the horſmen thereof* (in thoſe times therein conſiſted their ſtrength). So if once the *publick Ordinances* and *Miniſtry* be taken from us, the ſtrength and ſecurity of the Nation is gone.

Ariſt. Polit. lib. 7. cap. 8.

Liv. lib. 1. Decad. 3.

Socrat. Præfat. ad lib. 5. Hiſt.

3. *To*

3. *To uphold the glory of the Nation.* It is obſervable what the Lord ſaith to *Joſhua*, (*chap.5.9. This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.*) after they had *circumciſed* the people: that is, ſaith *Junius*, The *profaneneſs* of their Fathers in *Egypt*, whereby they grew careleſs and negligent of the *Ordinances* of God. God *rolled away* this reproach, *Dum per circumciſionem admittit ad celebrandum Paſcha*, (ſaith learned *Maſius*) which had for ſo many years been omitted. This the Apoſtle reckons as the *great priviledge*, Rom.3.2. ſo alſo the *great glory* of the *Jewiſh* Nation, *chap.9.4.* When the *Prieſts* were *ſlain*, and the *Ark taken*, *Phinehas* his wife named her childe *Ichabod*; *For* (ſaith ſhe) *the glory is departed from Iſrael.* So if ever we come to loſe the *Miniſtry* and *Ordinances*, you may well ſadly ſay, *The glory is departed from England.*

Taylor, Types, pag.47.

Maſius in loc.

4. *To preſerve their own glory, repute, and honour.* Thus was our *good* Magiſtrate in the Text *glorious* in the *eyes* of all the people, *Joſh*, 3.7. and 4.14. This is it which good Magiſtrates have always gloried in. I do not remember that the title of any one of *Davids Pſalms* is *David the King of Iſrael*, but the thirtieth *Pſalm* is inſcribed, *David the ſervant of the Lord.* He thought this ſurely the more glorious title. S. *Auſtin* tells us of *Theodoſius* the Emperour, That *Eccleſiæ ſe membrum eſſe, magis quàm in terris regnare gaudebat: He accounted it more his glory and honour to be himſelf a member of the Church, then Emperour of the world:* and in the 24 chapter of the ſame book, S. *Auſtin* tells us what Magiſtrates are truly to be accounted *happy* and *honourable*; Not thoſe, who *reign long*, or whoſe *conqueſts* are *many*, *ſucceſſes great*, or *power arbitrary*; *ſed qui ſuam poteſtatem ad Dei cultum maximè dilatandum Majeſtati ejus famulam faciunt*; *They who improve their power for the propagating the true Religion and ſervice of God, and make their power ſubſervient to his glory* to which they are obliged as *Chriſtians*, more as *Magiſtrates* ſet up by God for the *protection* of Religion. It is here ſpoken as the *glorie* and *honour* of *Joſhua*, *That the people ſerved the Lord all his daies.*

S. Auguſt. de Civ. Dei, lib.5. cap. 26

The *Application* ſhall onely be briefly this: Let both people and Magiſtrate from all this learn their duty. Hath the Magiſtrate ſuch an influence upon, and charge over *Religion* and the *ſervice* of God? Then let the people learn a three-fold dutie to Magiſtrates.

First, *Of prayer for them.* This *David* foretells as part of the glory of *Solomons* government, that *prayer ſhall continually be made for him*, Pſal.72.15. *Tertullian* ſhews that it was the conſtant practiſe of Chriſtians, to pray even for the *perſecuting* Emperours; *Hoc agite* (ſaith he) *boni Præſides, extorquete animam Deo ſupplicantem pro*

Tertul. Apol. cap.30, & 31.

Imperatore; *Send theſe Chriſtian ſouls to heaven breathing out prayers for their perſecuting Emperour.* And how much rather is it our duty to pray for thoſe Chriſtian Magiſtrates, who ſtand up for the defence and protection of the true worſhip of God? This is the uſe the Apoſtle makes of it, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1, 2. *I exhort therefore, that firſt of all, ſupplications, prayers, interceſſions, and giving of thanks be made for all men: For Kings and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godlineſs and honeſty.*

Secondly, *Of honour and reverence.* Rom. 13. 7. *Honour* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *to whom honour is due*; as being the Ordination of God, bearing the image of his authority; as alſo becauſe of thoſe bleſſings, which God derives unto us by them as inſtruments. Entertain honourable thoughts of them, as ſet over you not by chance, but providence; and though by man as the inſtrument (in which reſpect the Apoſtle *Peter* calls it ἀνθρωπίνη κτίσις, 1 *Pet.* 2. 13,) in electing, or the like; yet by God as the ſupreme Lord, in which reſpect S. *Paul* ſaith, all Magiſtrates are ὑπὸ τῶ Θεῶ τεταγμένοι. *Honour* them in your *words*, ſpeak no *evil* of them, or their adminiſtrations, without juſt cauſe; *Exod.* 22. 28. *Thou ſhalt not curſe the ruler of thy people.* Then give him an *outward civil reverence* in thy *geſture* and *deportment.* They certainly do not know the uſefulneſs of Magiſtracie, who do not honour them. It was a Law among the *Perſians*, that upon the death of the King, εἶναι ἀνομίαν πέντε ἡμέρων, *That for five days no laws ſhould be in force*, but every man left to do what he liſt, that they ſeeing the confuſion, outrages, and inconvenience of the want of Magiſtrates, might afterwards more reverence and eſteem them. And ſo ſhould we, if we rightly conſidered the miſerie of the want, or the happineſs of enjoying good Magiſtrates.

Gerard. pag. 154.

Thirdly, *Of ſubjection and obedience.* This is the Apoſtles direct inference; *Rom.* 13. 1. *Let every ſoul be ſubject to the higher powers*, &c. But why? *firſt*, For his authority and greatneſs, verſ. 4. He is Θεῶ διάκονος. *ſecondly*, For his uſefulneſs: it is σοὶ εἰς τὰγαθὸν, *It is to thee for good*; not onely for thy outward civil good, but for thy ſpiritual and eternal good; for thy natural good, protecting thy life; for thy moral good, by wholeſome laws reſtraining thee from ſin; thy civil good, in ſecuring thy outward enjoyments and intereſts; and thy ſpiritual good, while he upholds and propagates the preaching of the word, and the exerciſe of religion: thus *Paræus* gloſſeth. And are they not prevailing arguments of our ſubjection? How doth the Apoſtle *Peter* charge and reprove thoſe, who pretend their Chriſtian liberty (as many do now adays) as an exemption from obedience and ſubjection to the civil power, 1 *Pet.* 2. 13. *Submit your ſelves to every Ordinance of man*, &c. and *verſ.* 16.

16. *As free, and not uſing your liberty for a cloke of maliciouſneſs, but as the ſervants of God.* As is he had ſaid, *Uſe your liberty, but not to diſobedience.* Yet by way of caution let me add; Your obedience to them and ſubjection muſt be limited and reſtrained to thoſe commands, which are agreeing to, or not contrary to the commands of God; for to ſuch commands you owe the Magiſtrate no obedience. The *three children* refuſe obedience to the Kings command of *bowing to the golden image*, Dan. 3. 18. And Scripture ſpeaks of it as an *Act of faith* in the *Midwives*, to diſobey the Kings command of *killing all the male children*, Exod. 1. 17. & Heb. 11. 23. *Daniel* prayes three times a day, notwithſtanding the *edict* to the contrary, *Dan. 6. 10. Sauls* ſervants refuſe his wicked command in *killing the Prieſts of the* Lord, 1 *Sam.* 22. 17. *Ideò magnus eſt, quia cælo minor*, ſaith *Tertullian.* We muſt ſo give *to Ceſar the things that are Ceſars*, that we reſerve *to God the things that are Gods*, Matth. 22. 21. In other things the Apoſtles reſolution muſt be ours, Acts 4. 18.

Secondly, Hence, Magiſtrates, ſee your *charge*, and learn your *dutie*; no light or eaſie one. It is not onely the Crown upon your heads, but the Government upon your ſhoulders. *The earth is diſſolved; I bear up the pillars of it*, ſaith *David*, Pſal. 75. 3. Joyn you your ſhoulders to uphold it; joyn hand in hand together (I wiſh the Magiſtrates of both bodies would do it) to diſcountenance *profaneneſs*, to uphold the *ſervice* and *publick Ordinances*, to the puniſhing ſin; and let not any *ſelf-intereſts* or animoſities *break* your *ſtrength*, or *weaken* your *hands* in acting for God and for Religion. Let me inforce this upon you by a threefold conſideration.

I. Conſider, *from whom you have your power.* It is *from God*, Rom. 13. 1. *For there is no power but of God*, &c. And, *Pſal.* 82. 6. *I have ſaid ye are gods, and all of you are children of the moſt High:* which expreſſion, as it ſpeaks that tender fatherly regard God hath to good Magiſtrates, as fathers to their children; ſo it ſpeaks participation, that they derive all from God, as a ſon hath all from his father: therefore it is but equitie, that you ſhould employ that power, which you have received from his *goodneſs*, to his *glory*.

II. Conſider, *from whom you receive enablements, to put this power in execution.* God as he gives you the power, ſo he muſt enable you to execute it. It was God that gave *Solomon* wiſdome in anſwer to his prayer, (*Solomon* knew from whom he muſt have it) to *go in and out* before the people, 2 *Chron.* 1. 10, 12.

III. Conſider, *to whom you muſt be accountable for it.* It is not onely a power, but a talent and truſt God hath put into your hands; and he will one day call you to account for it: then what a terrible

word will that be to a wicked Magiſtrate, *Luke* 16.2. *And he called him, and ſaid unto him: How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy ſtewardſhip, for thou mayſt be no longer ſteward.* He that had improved his Talent, appeared chearfully before his Lord to give an account of it; ſo may you, if by protecting Religion and diſcountenancing ſin you improve your Talent of Authoritie for your Maſter's glorie, *Mat.*25.16.

And for your ſelf (M^r. *Major*) it being your choiſe to authorize me to be your *Remembrancer* this day, I ſhall end all with a *particular application* to you. Remember you are in a place of opportunitie of doing God ſervice: do you, if others neglect it, (though I hope the reſt of your Brethren will friendly go along with you, and put the ſhoulder to the work) ſtand up for Religion and the ſervice of God; do not look upon your ſelf onely, as entruſted by the Town, for the preſerving its peace, and immunities, and priviledges, but as entruſted and empowered by God for the good of the Church, and to keep up Religion in the Town; which that you may chearfully and couragiouſly go through, I ſhall hint unto you theſe motives.

The care of Religion,

1. *Will make your Government proſperous.* So God tells *Joſhua*, chap. 1. 8. *This book of the law ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou ſhalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayſt obſerve to do according unto all that is written therein: For then thou ſhalt make thy ways proſperous, and then thou ſhalt have good ſucceſs.* So *David* told *Solomon*, 1 Kings 2. 3. *And keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways,* &c. *that thou mayſt proſper in all that thou doſt, and whitherſoever thou turneſt thy ſelf.* Uphold Religion, it will ſecure you, 1 *Chron.* 22. 13. *Then ſhalt thou proſper, if thou takeſt heed to fulfill the Statutes and judgements, which the Lord charged Moſes with concerning Iſrael.* Thus *Hezekiah*, 2 Kings 18. 6,7. *For he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments which the Lord commanded Moſes. And the Lord was with him, and he proſpered whitherſoever he went forth.*

2. *It will make your life honourable, and perpetuate a good name to you*; which is better then precious oyntment. So ſaith the *Wiſeman*, Prov. 4.8. *Exalt her, and ſhe ſhall promote thee: ſhe ſhall bring thee to honour when thou doſt embrace her.*

3. *Your death comfortable.* It is a fit meditation for a Magiſtrate to think of death. *Alexander* had one to be his conſtant *Remembrancer* of this: and the Pſalmiſt puts the *gods of the earth* in minde of it, *Pſal.* 82.6,7. *But ye ſhall die like men, and fall like on of the Princes.* Now this will ſweeten death to reflect upon our faithfulneſs in our

our particular callings. S. *Paul*, when he had *finiſhed his courſe*, and *kept the faith*, could deſire to be diſſolved. *Moſes*, a faithfull Magiſtrate, zealous for God, and againſt Idolatrie (with what courage did he cauſe the Calf to be burned?) the Jews ſay of him, that he died *ad oſculum oris Dei, at the kiſſes of Gods mouth, and in divine embraces.* How comfortably did *Hezekiah* reflect upon this on his deathbed, *Eſay.38.3. And he ſaid, Remember now, O Lord, I beſeech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart; and have done that which is good in thy ſight.* Thus happie ſhall you be both in life and death, if you make it your care, what was *Joſhua's* here in the Text, that as they did all his days, ſo all your days *the people may ſerve the Lord.*

FINIS.

SCRIPTURE-SEARCH:

A

Dutie very neceſſarie for theſe times,
To ground unſtable Chriſtians,
and to prevent Apoſtaſie:

Laid down in ſeveral Sermons,

By

JOHN FROST, *B. D.* ſometimes
Fellow of S. *JOHNS* Colledge, and
late Preacher in *Olaves-Hartſtreet*
in *London.*

Let the word of Chriſt dwell in you richly, Coloſſ. 3.16.
You do err, not knowing the Scriptures, Matth. 22. 29.

Adoro Scripturæ plenitudinem, Tertullian.
Ama ſacras Scripturas, & amabit te ſapientia. Hieron.

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JOHN 5. 39.

Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that teſtifie of me.

Lec 3. 27. ve.

THere are three things, that may ſecure Chriſtians from being ſcandalized at, or ſeduced by the Errours, and Hereſies of theſe times.

Firſt, That Scripture hath clearly foretold there muſt be ſuch.

Seconly, That theſe are but the revivings of thoſe Hereſies, which have been in all ages of the Church.

Thirdly, That Scripture affords us plentifull proviſion of arguments to confute them.

And to inſtance in that one Hereſie, or blaſphemie of the *Socinian* at this day, *viz.* denying *the Divinitie of Chriſt*. We ſhall finde it was foretold by the Apoſtle S. *Peter*, in 2 *Pet.* 2.1. (*denying the Lord that bought them*) and condemned of old by the Fathers, and Councels, in *Samoſatenus*, *Photinus*, *Arius*, *Ebion*, *Cerinthus*, and others: and laſtly, the Scripture abundantly ſilenced this horrid blaſphemie, eſpecially by S. *John*, both in his Epiſtles, and Goſpel. In his firſt Epiſtle, where, by his πολλοὶ ἀντίχριστοι, 1 *John* 2.18. his *many Antichriſts*, he means *Marcion*, *Ebion*, *Cerinthus*, and ſuch like. And in his Goſpel, which in the judgement of *Irenæus* and divers others of the Ancients, was written on purpoſe againſt the blaſphemie of *Ebion* and *Cerinthus*, the predeceſſours and Fathers of our late *Socinians*. And to evince this (To omit the firſt chapter, which is ſo clear a teſtimonie of the God-head of Chriſt, that *Junius* confeſſes, he was converted from Atheiſme to an acknowledgement of Chriſt by his reading of it) I need travel no further then the context of this chapter, wherein my preſent Text lies, where our bleſſed Saviour diſputing againſt the Jews, he demonſtrates himſelf to be the *true Meſſiah*, and ſo conſequently *true God*, by a four fold teſtimonie.

I. Of *John Baptiſt*: whom the Jews were obliged to believe, becauſe they had before ſent to him, to enquire of Chriſt, *v.* 33. *Ye ſent unto John, and he bare witneſs of the truth.*

II. Of *his own works and miracles*; which evidently argued the *arm* of *omnipotencie* to effect them, at *verſe* 36. *The works which the Father hath given me to finiſh, the ſame works that I do bear witneſs of me, that the Father hath ſent me.*

III. Of *the Father*, at *verſe* 37. *The Father himſelf which hath ſent me, hath born witneſs of me*; *viz.* that very teſtimony which the Father gave of the Son, at his being baptized, in *Mat.*3.17. *This is my well-beloved Son.*

IV. Of *Scripture*, here in the Text, which though it be mentioned by our Saviour, as the *laſt*, yet is not to be accounted of as the *leaſt teſtimony*, as we ſhall ſee in the further handling of them. *Search the Scriptures*, &c.

The words therefore, for the better handling of them, we ſhall conſider two waies.

Firſt, *Relatively*, as they ſtand to the *context*.

Secondly, *Abſolutely*, as conſidered by *themſelves*.

Firſt, *Relatively*.

Thus conſidered, they are an argument to prove the God-head, and Office of Chriſt, which was denied and rejected by the Jews. And this he puts laſt, that he might vindicate his Doctrine from the ſuſpicion and imputation of *novelty*: and alſo, and that more eſpecially, becauſe all the former teſtimonies lay expoſed to the cavils, and exceptions of the Jews: as thus,

Againſt *the teſtimony of John* the objection was obvious, that *he was one ſent, and ſuborned by Chriſt*, and therefore his teſtimony very inconſiderable.

Againſt *his working of miracles*, they could eaſily anſwer, as ſometimes they did, that *he caſt out devils by Beelzebub.*

Againſt *the teſtimonie of the Father from heaven*, it was as eaſie to cavil, and ſay, that *it was but a phantaſie and deluſion*, a *deceptio ſensûs*, *or*, perhaps, *a Satanical revelation.*

But, when he appeals to the Scriptures, which the Jews themſelves acknowledged, and were even *ſuperſtitious ſearchers* into, they could have nothing to cavil, or rationally to object: therefore he ſaith, *Search the Scriptures*, &c. as if he had ſaid, *If*, or, *although you will not believe any of the former teſtimonies, yet, ſure I am, you cannot deny this.*

And from hence the obſervation is this,

Obſerv. *Scripture teſtimony is the moſt certain, and infallible ground and evidence of ſaving truth.*

More certain then Humane teſtimonie, then Miracles, or Revelations.

And this may be cleared by theſe reaſons.

I. It

I. It is more certain then *Humane teſtimonie*; for

1. *Scripture teſtimonie* is αὐτόπιστον, *to be credited, and believed for it ſelf*, upon account of that Divine authoritie it brings with it. It was a blinde reverence that *Pythagoras*'s ſcholars gave him; whoſe αὐτὸς ἔφη was ſufficient to command their aſſent to, and entertainment of whatſoever he taught them. This is that we ow to Scripture; what it ſpeaks, we muſt receive as the voice of God: for ſo it is, if we credit the Apoſtle, *Hebr.* 1. 1. *God ſpake unto us ſundrie waies*, &c. No humane teſtimony can be αὐτόπιστον: becauſe the beſt of men are fallible, ſubject to errour in judgement, or to be perverted by paſſion, or intereſt of wrath, or to ſpeak contrarie to truth; therefore I believe no humane writing, but what brings ſatisfaction to my reaſon, and ſuſpend my aſſent till I meet with a rational conviction: but in *Scripture-teſtimony*, though I meet with no other ſatisfaction to my reaſon, then this, that *God hath ſaid it*, I give my aſſent and belief to it. And thus the Prophets of old uſed no other arguments to perſwade what they delivered, then, *Thus ſaith the Lord.* Divine teſtimony is above all exception, and to be believed for it ſelf; not becauſe of the ſuffrage of the Church, nor the conſent and approbation of reaſon; for this were to exalt Humane teſtimony above Divine, and the dictates of a fallible reaſon, above the infallible revelations of God, and to ſet that in *the throne*, which God would have us captivate and ſubdue, as in 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. The aſſent we ow to Humane teſtimonies upon rational conviction, is an aſſent of ſcience and demonſtration; but the aſſent I ow to Scripture teſtimony, is an aſſent of faith, grounded onely upon Divine revelation, which is to be believed, though the the teſtimonie of all the world, and the ſeeming plauſible pretences of reaſon ſhould contradict it. As the myſterie of the *Trinity, Incarnation, Reſurrection*, and the like, are to *reaſon* ſeeming contradictions, yet to be believed upon the account of Scripture teſtimony; in which the ultimate reſolution of our faith ought to be made not into the *fallible evidences* of reaſon, or the *erring dictates* of men. If you finde a *ſcriptum eſt, Let God be true though all men be liars*, Rom. 3. 4.

2. Becauſe of *that conſent and harmony that is in Scripture teſtimony*: no jarring or contradiction in it; but what *the Prophets foretold, the Evangeliſts ſpeak of*, is fulfilled. In *humane writings* how frequently may we obſerve one contradicting another, and this reaſon claſhing with that? Nay, the ſame authour through ignorance or forgetfulneſs inconſiſtent to himſelf: but in Scripture, there is a full and perfect conſent, as all proceeding from the dictate of the ſame infallible ſpirit, as in 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. *All Scripture is*

given by inſpiration of God, &c. and 2 Pet. 1. 21. *For the propheſie came not in old times by the will of man; but Holy men of God ſpake, as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt.* And though there may ſeem ſometimes to be ſome contradictions, and inconſiſtences; yet theſe ariſe not from the Scripture it ſelf, but from our ſhortneſs, weakneſs, or ignorance, and the like: therefore we ſay what our Saviour ſaith at verſ. 46. of this chapter, *Had ye believed Moſes, ye would have believed me*: and, as *Paul* ſpeaks in his *Apologie* for himſelf, *Act. 26. 22. Saying none other things then thoſe, which the Prophets and Moſes did ſay ſhould come.* A ſweet conſent there is between *Chriſt*, *Moſes*, and *Paul*.

3. Becauſe *Scripture was given to this very end to be a certain and infallible ground of truth*: for though God, during the *infancy* of the Church, while it was incloſed in ſome few families, revealed himſelf by *viſions*, and communicated his will from hand to hand by *tradition*, from *Adam* to *Moſes*, and by *extraordinary revelation*; yet, when the Church increaſed, and the people grew more corrupt and inclining to the *heathen Idolatry*, God gave the *law* by *Moſes*, and ſo ſucceſſively by the Prophets and Apoſtles, by whom it pleaſed God to reveal his minde and will to all in writing, both *that it might be the better conveyed unto poſterity*, as we finde it in *Pſal.* 102. 18. *This ſhall be written for the generation to come:* and *the more eaſily ſecured from corruption.* Had God ſtill conveyed it unto us by the way of *tradition*: either through the unfaithfulneſs of mans memory, or his being ſubject to errour, or affectation of novelty, it had been laid open to a multitude of corruptions, which if (as experience ſhewes us) ſcarce prevented by the penning of it, how much leſs, if it never had been written? And alſo, *that the Church might have an exact ſtandard of faith, & a perfect rule, and an infallible judge of truth*, and therefore Epheſ. 2. 20. *The Church* is ſaid to be *built upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf being the *chief corner ſtone. Faith* builds ſurer here then upon the *teſtimony* of the Prophets, and Apoſtles. And this S. *Luke* tells us expreſly was his reaſon of writing the Goſpel, *Luke* 1. 3, 4. *That thou mighteſt know the certainty of thoſe things*, &c. And thus more certain then *Humane teſtimony*.

II. More certain then *miracles*: for though it pleaſed God at firſt to confirm the truth of the Goſpel by miracles to the conviction of the Adverſaries, as *Nicodemus* ſpeaks to our Saviour, in *John* 3. 2. Yet now, God having compleated the *Canon* of Scripture, and warned us, not to *receive any other doctrine, though an Angel from Heaven ſhould bring it*, Galat. 1. 8. and pronounced a *wo* upon all thoſe, *who ſhould add or detract from it*, Revelat. 22. 18.

if

if any ſhould bring any doctrine contrary to Scripture, with pretence of confirming it by wonders, and miracles, we ought to reject it as erroneous and Antichriſtian: and ſo we ſee the Apoſtle makes this one of the badges of Antichriſt, 2 *Theſſal.* 2. 9.

III. More certain then *Revelations.* There is a place, that I have oft thought of, it is in 2 *Pet.* 1. 18. A true voice of God from heaven of his ſon Chriſt: yet the Apoſtle tells us, that we may more infalliblely finde Chriſt in *in the word of Propheſie*, (what that is, he tells us ver. 20. προφητεία γραφῆς) then by extraordinary revelations. Revelations we acknowledge, viz. of the ſpirit revealing, and clearing up Goſpel-truth: and this is that the Apoſtle pray'd for in behalf of the *Epheſians*, in *Epheſ.* 1. 16, 17, 18. *I ceaſe not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of glory, may give unto you the ſpirit of wiſdome, and revelation in the knowledge of him*, &c. and thus Chriſt revealed the Scriptures to the diſciples, *Luke* 24. 45, 46. that they might underſtand them, but not that under that pretence of Revelation they ſhould reject, and lay them aſide. It is fond, and ungodly to pretend to Revelations, beſides or contrary to the Scripture. S *Paul* would have an *Angel from heaven*, if he brings it, to be *accurſed*, Galat. 1. 8. and what are they then, who receive them? Again he tells the Church of *Epheſus*, that he had *declared* unto them *the whole councel of God*, *Acts* 20. 27. and yet at *Acts* 26. 22. he profeſſes that he ſaid *nothing but what Moſes and the Prophets had ſaid ſhould come:* yet this S. *Paul* was *rapt up into the third heaven*, and there heard ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα, *unſpeakable words*, in 2 *Cor.* 12. 4. There can be no ſecurity for our faith from Revelations, unleſs they be ſuch as bring evidences and aſſurances that they are from God; for Satan can transform himſelf into *an angel of light*, 2 *Cor.* 11. 14. Now how ſhall we diſtinguiſh Satans deluſions from Revelations, but by the Teſtimony of the Scriptures, by which we are commanded to *try the Spirits*, 1 John 4. 1. For theſe Revelations, and Enthuſiaſmes men pretend unto, are oft as contrary and inconſiſtent to themſelves, as they are all contrary to the truth; and therefore muſt be tryed by ſome infallible rule: otherwiſe we ſhall conſtantly lie expoſed to deluſion, unſetled in judgement, and irreſolved as to practiſe, as not knowing what the next revelation may be, perhaps quite contrary to the former. Wherefore, believe it, they who will not reſt upon the Scripture as the foundation of faith, can reſt no where. When the Rich man in the Goſpel would have had one extraordinary to have been ſent from the dead to his brethren: obſerve what anſwer *Abraham* gives him, *Luke* 16. 29, 30, 31. *They have Moſes, and the Prophets, and if they hear not*

them, neither will they hear, though one come from the dead. If one comes with Revelation, and tells me, It comes from God, he muſt convince me of the truth of it, or elſe I may with the ſame eaſineſs ſay, It is from Satan: and this conviction can be made no otherwiſe but by Scripture, which is the moſt infallible ground of truth.

What the *Phariſees* ſaid of Chriſt, we may truly ſay of our late pretenders to *Enthuſiaſmes* and *Revelations*, *We know not whence he is*, John 9. 29. They may be from *Rome* (as it is more then probable ſome of them are:) or whence ſoever they come, certainly not from God, if they diſown the voice of God in the Scriptures. Wherefore my counſel to you ſhall be that of S. *Paul* to the *Theſſalonians*, 2 *Theſſal.* 2. 2. *Be not ſoon ſhaken in minde, nor be troubled:* and in 2 *Tim.* 1. 18. *Hold faſt the form of ſound words.* And this will be uſefull thus:

Firſt, Then *make your laſt appeal to Scriptures in matters of faith.* The *Papiſts* appeal to *uncertain traditions*, the *Enthuſiaſt* to *deluding Revelation*; let us to the *Scriptures*, for this is both the precept of God, and the conſtant practiſe of the Scriptures: *To the Law and to the Teſtimonie*, Eſay 8. 20. So our Bleſſed Saviour always appeals to the Scriptures, as in the buſineſs of the *Reſurrection*, Matth. 22. 29. And to prove himſelf *the Meſſiah*, he appeals to *Moſes* and the *Prophets*, Luke 24. 26, 27. Thus the Apoſtles, though acted by the *ſame infallible Spirit*, yet always appealed to *Moſes*, and *the Prophets:* ſo did S. *Peter*, Acts 2. 25, 31. and from thence did *Apollos* confute the Jews, *Acts* 18. 29. and ſo *Paul* to prove the *reſurrection of Chriſt*, in *Acts* 13. 23. So then (*my brethren*) appeal not to the judgement and teſtimony of man, what he ſaith: (as S. *Cyprian* was much delighted with *Tertullian*, that he was wont to ſay, *Da magiſtrum*;) nor to the dictates of dark reaſon: but to the *infallible Teſtimonie* of the *Scriptures*, and attend to *Gods voice* in them.

Secondly, *See here the ingenuous boldneſs and confidence of truth, that dares appeal to Scripture.* Chriſt was confident of his cauſe, and therefore declines not the *teſt* of Scriptures: *Search them*, ſaith he; as if he had ſaid, *If they do not teſtifie of me, then do not acknowledge me.* It argues a timorous diffidence and conſciouſneſs of men, when they like not to be tried by the word of God; as in the *Papiſt*, who appeals *from the Scripture to traditions*; and it ſpeaks the errours of thoſe *Revelations*, which will not ſubſcribe to be tried here: you may ſafely reject that doctrine as erroneous, which will not be *weighed* in the *ballance* of the Scriptures; or if it be weighed there, proves *light* and *wanting*. *Tertullian* of old notes, that *Hereticks*

ticks were *lucifugæ Scripturarum*. As *blear-eyes* decline *looking upon the ſun*, ſo *corrupt doctrines* the *light of the Scriptures*.

Thirdly, *Embrace and entertain nothing as ſaving truth, which will not bear the teſt of Scripture*. It is one uſe of Scripture, to be profitable πρὸς ἔλεγχον, 2 *Tim*. 3. 16. to *confute*, and *ſilence hereſie* and *error*: and what-ever the Scripture reproves is ſuch. Be not impoſed upon by the proud imperious dictates of men, nor deluded by the pretences and deluſions of Satan, and his inſtruments; but let this be your rule to try by.

Fourthly, *In all your doubts conſult the Scriptures*. So did *David* in *Pſal*. 119. 24. He made the *Teſtimonies of God* his *delight*, and his *counſellours* to *enform and reſolve him*: and that, 1. *In doubts of the head for reformation*: this is one excellency of the Scriptures, to *make wiſe the ſimple*; as in *Pſal*. 19. 7. *Scripture*, ſayes the Apoſtle, 2 *Tim*. 3. 16. *is profitable to inform the judgement*: and by this did *David* become *wiſer then his teachers*. 2. *In doubts of the heart for conſolation*. That was one end of *Goſpel-revelation*, that *we through patience and comfort of the Scripture might have hope*, Rom. 15. 4. And ſo *David* found the *ſtatutes of God*, to be the *rejoycing of his heart*, Pſal. 19. 8. In *inward doubts* of *conſcience* have recourſe to the Scriptures, there thou mayſt finde thoſe *cordial promiſes*, which will put *joy* and *gladneſs* into thy heart. In thy *duty* conſult the Scripture, which will *direct* thee; In thy *troubles* to *comfort* thee; In thy *fears* to *ſupport* thee; In all thy *doubts*, to *comfort* and *reſolve* thee.

So much for the words conſidered *Relatively*.

Secondly, *Abſolutely* in *themſelves*. And ſo they will fall under a double conſideration too.

Firſt, As taken *by way of Conceſſion*, *Indicatively*, and ſo *Beza*, *Camero*, *Paræus*, and others underſtand them; and ſo alſo they ſpeak I. Our Saviours commendation of theſe Jews, as *diligent ſearchers into Scripture*: Or elſe, II. His diſcommendation of them and reproof: and that, 1. either of their ignorance, that notwithſtanding they did *ſearch into Scripture*, yet they attained not to the knowledge of him, as the true *Meſſiah*: that though they had frequently Bibles in their hands, yet they had not the word of God dwelling in their hearts. Or, 2. of their malice, that, notwithſtanding they *ſearched the Scriptures*, which did ſo evidently *teſtifie* of Chriſt, yet they *maliciouſly* rejected him, and would not *come unto him, that they might have life*; as in *verſ*. 40.

Secondly, As taken *by way of exhortation*, *Imperatively*, ſpeaking a command to all, *to ſearch the Scriptures*. And I ſhall take it in this ſecond acception: it being the drift of a great part of this chapter,

chapter, to exhort theſe Jewes to hear the word of Chriſt, and *Paræus* himſelf acknowledges, that *uterque ſenſus eſt pius & commodus*. And thus taken, there are three things conſiderable in the words.

Firſt, *The nature of the duty*, expreſſed in the word ἐρευνᾶτε.

Secondly, *The univerſality of the dutie*, and that is double.

I. Of the *Perſons* engaged in it, expreſſed *indefinitely*.

II. Of the *Object*, τὰς γραφάς: that is *all Scripture*.

Thirdly, *The motive and arguments of the duty*, and they are two.

I. *The benefit of Scripture-ſearch. Ye think ye have eternal life in them.*

II. *The object of Scripture-diſcoverie:* that is Chriſt, *they teſtifie of me.*

All which particulars may be reduced to this one general Obſervation, *That Scripture-ſearch is a duty every Chriſtian ought to be engaged in.* Or thus,

It is the duty of every Chriſtian to ſearch the Scriptures.

In the handling of which *obſervation*, this method ſhall be obſerved.

Firſt, *To ſhew the importance of the word* ἐρευνᾶτε.

Secondly, *What ſearchers of Scripture Chriſt here points at.*

Thirdly, *The univerſality of the duty.*

Fourthly, *The grounds of this ſearch.*

Fifthly, *The Application.*

Firſt, *To ſhew the importance of the word*, ἐρευνᾶτε. The word ſignifies *ſuch a ſearch*, as *diggers* in *mines* make for *gold* and *ſilver* in the earth, and implies five things.

I. *A valuation and eſteem of the Scriptures.* He that digs in *a mine* for *gold* evidences his *valuation* of it; otherwiſe he would never dig for it: ſo *ſearching of Scripture* ſpeaks an *high eſtimate* and *prizing* of Scripture. Such a *ſearcher of Scripture* was *David*, Pſal. 119. 72. who prized *the truth of God*, more then *thouſands of gold and ſilver:* and ſuch a ſearcher was S. *Auguſtine* alſo, who ſays of himſelf, *ſacræ Scripturæ tuæ ſunt ſanctæ delitiæ meæ.* And ſurely, the more a man ſearches into theſe mines, the more will he prize and value them, and he that hath the ſpirit of God cannot certainly but prize thoſe Scriptures, even becauſe they come from him.

II. *A particular enquiry into Scripture.* He that digs in *a mine* turns over every particular *clod* of earth, in which there is probably any *gold*; leſt he ſhould loſe any of it: ſo ſhould Chriſtians in ſearching the Scriptures *particularly* examine every Scripture, leſt they loſe any of that *treaſure* that is hidden in thoſe *mines* *Adoro*

ſcripturæ

Scripturæ plenitudinem, ſaith *Tertullian*. There is a *fulneſs* of *divine treaſure in the Scriptures*, which is able to make a ſoul *rich* in *faith* and *enriched* in all *knowledge*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 5. And *this treaſure* is not diſcovered by a perfunctory, general *view* of Scripture: but by a *particular enquiry*, and *examination* into it: for there is not any Scripture, but hath more or leſs of this treaſure in it: every ἰῶτα of it, ſaith our Saviour, ſhall be *fulfilled*, Matth. 5. 18.

III. *A diligent and frequent peruſing of Scripture.* He that digs in a mine makes it his every-days-work, and gives not over, till he hath found the riches and treaſure in it. It is not a ſuperficial glance upon Scripture, which will make a diſcovery of that heavenly treaſure to us. Scripture-ſearch muſt be our every-days-work; &, indeed, it calls for our daily diligence: thus *David* deſcribes the *bleſſed man* to be one, that *meditates in the law of God day and night*. Pſal. 1. 2. This ſearching S *Paul* commends to *Timothy*, *Give attendance to reading*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 13. and for which the *Bereans* are commended, *Acts* 17. 11. and this God commanded the children of Iſrael, Deut. 6. 6, 7. *Theſe words which I command thee this day ſhall be in thy heart, and thou ſhalt teach them diligently unto thy children, & ſhalt talk of them, when thou ſitteſt in thine houſe*, &c. There is more golden oare in a clod of earth, then he that digs in a mine diſcovers at firſt: ſo there is a myſteriouſneſs in Scripture, which by a curſory reading of Scripture cannot be diſcovered. Great myſteries lie *ſub cortice literæ*, wrapt up in the letter of Scripture, which is diſcovered by oft reading and examining. A Chriſtian meets with that information, thoſe quicknings, ſupports, and comforts at one time, which he doth not at another. It is ſaid of *Alphonſus*, that he had read over the Bible ten times with a large comment upon it: and of another, a *Tranſylvanian* Prince, that he had read over the Bible twenty ſeven times: & of *Theodoſius* the Emperour, that (as *Nicephorus* relates) had a lampe ſo artificially made conſtantly ſupplying it ſelf with oyle, leſt any thing might diſturbe or interrupt his ſtudy of Scripture. And this certainly is the ready way to diſcover the heavenly treaſure, which is hid in Scripture: as we ſee God by the miniſterie of *Philip* revealed Chriſt to the *Eunuch*, while he was thus diligently reading the Prophet *Iſaiah*, as it is in *Acts* 8. 28. *Nicephor. lib. 4. cap. 3.*

IIII. *A through ſearch and ſcrutiny: a digging deep* in theſe mines. We do not finde mines of Gold upon the ſurface, and ſuperficies of the earth, but in the bowels of it, & therefore there muſt be a digging deep: this word in the Text, ſometimes in Scripture expreſſeth *Gods ſearching*, as ὁ ἐρευνῶν τὰς καρδίας, *Rom.* 8. 27. which is ſo *through* and *exact a ſearch*, that not the deepeſt thought of the heart can eſcape this ſearching of God. There are depths in Scripture *A through-ſearch*, profundiùs effodere. Διασκάπτειν αὐτὸ μὴ ἀκριβείας κελεύει, ἵνα τὸ ἐν τῷ βάθει κείμενον ἐυρεῖν. So S. *Chryſoſt.*

which we muſt *dig for*, before we can *fathom* them. The Scripture is a *myſtery*, 1 Tim.3.16. *a myſterie hid from ages and generations*, Coloſſ.1.26. Here are the τὰ βάθη τοῦ Θεοῦ, 1 Cor. 2.10. *the deep things of God*: his Nature, his Attributes, his Councels and Decrees; which the Apoſtle calls ἀνεξεραύνητα, *unſearchable*, Rom. 11.33. So there are the τὰ βάθη τοῦ Σατανᾶ, *Revel.*2.24. the *depths*, *methods*, *wiles*, and *ſubtleties of Satan*, which the Scripture diſcovers, and provides us with *armour* againſt them, *Epheſ.* 6. And there are *the depths of our own hearts*. (Pſal. 64.6. the *inward thought*, and the *heart is deep*): and this Scripture diſcovers, 1 *Cor.*14.25. But we muſt dig before we can finde them. The *ſecrets* of Gods *Councels* had lain hid in his own breaſt, had he not diſcovered them in his word: and Satan doth not lay his plots *above board*, obvious to every eye: and for our own hearts, *they are deceitfull above all things, who can know them*, Jerem.17.9. and therefore it muſt be a deep ſearch to diſcover them.

V. And laſtly, *It ſignifies labour and pains. Digging in mines* is a very tedious laborious work: ſo is ſearching theſe ſpiritual mines; *Prov.* 2.4. *If thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid treaſures.* We may obſerve what *S. Peter* ſaies of the Prophets enquiring after ſalvation, 1 *Pet.* 1.10,11. ἐξηραύνησαν, at *verſe* 10. *ſearched diligently*; and ſo again at *verſe* 11. ἐρευνῶντες. No gold without digging, no heavenly treaſure of knowledge and grace without a diligent and laborious ſearch of Scripture. And that for the firſt:

Secondly, *What ſearchers of Scripture Chriſt here points at.*

There may be much ſearching to little purpoſe: and people may take much pains, and no profit may come of it, but ſometimes a great deal of miſchief.

I ſhall ſhew them therefore,

Firſt, *Negatively*,

Secondly, *Poſitively*.

Firſt, *Negatively*: and here our Saviour means not,

I. *The curious ſearcher of Scripture*, who reads it more to ſatisfie his curioſitie, then to regulate his life: who in ſearching neglects that which is obvious, and moſt neceſſarie, and is prying into that, which is more difficult and nice: that feeds upon the huſks (as I may ſpeak) and pleaſeth his phantaſie with a few nice *critical* obſervations of ſome few paſſages of Scripture, in the mean time neglecting the more *ſubſtantial food* of his ſoul, the plain truths of the Goſpel. One who plaies the *Chymiſt* with Scripture (which ſome think is intimated in that expreſſion of Scripture, in 2 *Pet.* 3. 16. στρεβλοῦσι) who would get that out of the Scriptures (as thoſe

out

out of natural bodies) what God never put into them: ſuch as with that accurſed *Politian* prefers an *Ode* of *Pindar*, before all the *Pſalms* of *David*: becauſe there he findes more ſatisfaction to his nice and vain curioſitie. Scripture was never written for this end, *to ſatisfie any mans curioſitie.*

II. *Not the preſumptuous ſearcher of Scripture*, who would meaſure all *Scripture-myſteries* by his own reaſon and apprehenſion; and, neglecting learning of his Chriſtian dutie, preſumes to examine, and thinks to comprehend Gods *ſecret councels*: and where the Apoſtle is put to his ὦ βάθος! he queſtions not but he can fathom. He is ſearching more what God *decreed from eternitie*, then what himſelf ought to *do in time*. It was a good ſaying of *Seneca*, *Nuſquam verecundiores eſſe debemus, quàm cum de Deo agitur*, *Modeſty never becomes us better, then when we ſpeak of God*: eſpecially, when we ſearch into his Actings and Councels; which, it is modeſty and pietie to admire; boldneſs and preſumption to ſearch too much into: which the Apoſtle calls, *An intruding into thoſe things he hath not ſeen, vainly puft up by his fleſhly minde*, Coloſſ. 2. 18.

III. *Not the diſcourſive ſearcher*, who ſearches into Scripture, onely that he may have matter of diſcourſe, not that he may have matter to practiſe: and that perhaps ſcoffingly, as that Apoſtate *Julian*, who ſaid, ἀνέγνων, ἔγνων, καλέγνων, that *he had read, underſtood, and contemned the Scripture*. This is to read it onely as a hiſtorie, or idlely, and vainly jeſting with the Scriptures: and thoſe ſearchers have Scripture at their tongues end, but not at their hearts: which the Saviour reproves here in theſe Jews, who were great ſearchers of Scriptures, *verſe* 28. ſuch who have Bibles in their houſes, but not the word of God, *dwelling richly in their hearts*, as the Apoſtle commands in *Coloſſ.* 3. 16. *Scripture-diſcourſe* is good, if it be pious, ſerious, and to build up one another: but *Scripture-practiſe* is better.

IV. *Not the prejudiced, opinionated ſearcher of Scripture*, who comes prepoſſeſſed with an opinion, and ſo prejudiced againſt the truths of the Goſpel, and onely ſearcheth Scripture ſo far, as will comply with, and Patronize *that opinion*. Men come poſſeſſed with ſome high notions, and phantaſies of their own, and then they wreſt the Scripture, and make it ſtoop to thoſe *prepoſſeſſions*, and this is the reaſon, why many men finde ſo little in Scripture: that they finde it very hard to veil and ſubmit their *Speculations* and *Notions*, to the ſimplicitie of Goſpel-truth.

V. *Not the ſuperſtitious ſearcher of Scripture*, who reſts in the *o-*

pus operatum, the work done: ſuch ſearchers were theſe Jews, who were wont to number the letters in the old Teſtament, and could tell you how oft every letter was uſed: ſo carefull were they of the Bible, that in an heap of books, they would not ſuffer another book to lie on the top of a Bible, and if any did by chance let it fall, they were certainly puniſhed for it; ſo writes *Brentius*: but this they accounted their *righteouſneſs*, and thought to have life and happineſs in the bare reading of the Scripture, which was that, for which Chriſt here blames them; not that they ſearched, but that they thought to have life by doing it; though they neglected and perſecuted Chriſt, at *verſe* 40. *Plus aquo illis tribuiſtis*, ſaith *Grotius*. They thought, if they did enlarge their *Phylacteries*, and read the Law ſo many times over, they were ſecure of everlaſting life.

Brentius in loc. Διὰ τὸ ἐπὶ τῇ ψιλῇ ἀναγνώσει μόνον αὐ᾽τοὺς ἔχειν. *Chryſoſt.*

VI. *Not the careleſs and irreverent ſearcher of Scripture*, who ſometimes runs over a few chapters of the Bible, (as the Papiſts mumble over their *Ave-Maries*) without any reverent apprehenſions of God the Authour of Scripture, or minding the matter, or myſterie of Scripture. Οὐκ εἶπεν, Ἀναγινώσκετε, ἀλλὰ Ἐρευνᾶτε τὰς γραφάς. *He does not ſay, onely barely Read, and know, but Search the Scriptures.* *Chryſoſt.*

VII. *Not the carnal ſecure ſearcher*, who comes to the reading of the Scriptures with a reſolution to go on in his ſins, whatſoever the Scripture ſaith to the contrarie: Let Scripture ſay what it will, they will do what they liſt: ſuch as theſe can read the Promiſes of God, yet remain unbelieving; his Threatnings, and not tremble; his Judgements, and with a proud *Pharaoh*, grow harder by them; his Commands, yet neglect and diſobey them: that as *Noah's* unclean beaſts in the Ark *went in unclean*, and *came out unclean*: ſo theſe come to the reading Scripture, and hearing the Word, and remain ſtill ſecure in ſin, and hardned in their iniquitie: as thoſe in *Jeremiah*, 44. 16, 17. that told the Prophet plainly, *As for the word, which thou haſt ſpoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not hear it.*

VIII. *Not the the profane ſearcher of Scripture*, who ſearches the Scripture, onely to finde what may ſeemingly be wreſted to Patronize his licentious, and wicked practiſes, who makes uſe of Scripture to cover, and excuſe his wickedneſs: as we read of thoſe Heathens in 1 *Maccab.* 3. 28. that made diligent ſearch into the book of the Law, that *they might print thereby the likeneſs of their Idols*: ſo many ſearch the ſcripture, onely to find ſomething, that may favour a corrupt opinion, or a licentious practiſe. Thus *Julian* the Apoſtate robbed the Chriſtians of all their goods and eſtates, Patronzing

tronizing that practiſe by *Matth.* 5. 3. *Bleſſed are the poor*, &c. not conſidering what followed: and *Chemnitius* tell us of one, who reading that place, *Go, and ſell all that thou haſt*, went and ſold his Bible too, ſaying, *jam plenè Chriſti mandato ſatisfeci.* And thus indeed do the Papiſts, who never flee to the refuge of *Traditions*, but when the Scriptures fail them. And, truly, there hath been no *erroneous principle*, or *wicked practiſe*, but hath endeavoured to *ſhrowd* it ſelf under *protection* of the Scriptures: and by this means men have been engaged to wreſting Scripture, to *their own*, and *other mens deſtructions*.

Chemn. loc. de paupert. ae.

IX. *Not the partial quarrelſome ſearcher of Scripture*, who quarrels with, and *caſts away* all Scripture that makes againſt him, and *admits* onely that, which may ſuit with his corrupt doctrines. Such ſearchers of Scriptures have Hereticks been in all ages. Thus *Arius* wreſted the eighth chapter of the *Proverbs* out of the *Canon*, as ſpeaking of the *eternitie* of *Increated wiſdome*, and ſo contradicted his blaſphemy in denying the *Divinitie of Chriſt*. It is that, which *Irenæus* notes, as the *Genius* of all Hereticks, *Cùm ex ſcripturis redarguuntur*, ſaith he, *in ſcripturarum redargutionem convertuntur*, *If Scripture reprove their Hereſie, they will preſently fall out, and quarrel with Scripture.* So the *Manichees* of old rejected all the *Old Teſtament*; and *Cerinthus* all the *Goſpels*, but *Matthew*; and the *Ebionites* all the *Epiſtles*; and ſo the *Antinomians* reject the *Law*, as no part of Scripture, or at leaſtwiſe not obliging them. In a word, what *Epiphanius* of old obſerved of the *Gnoſticks*, we may truely obſerve of the Hereticks of our times: his words are very full, and ſuite with our preſent Hereſies: *When they finde any thing in the Scripture, that may make againſt their opinion, then they ſay, That comes from the ſpirit of the world: but if they can finde out any thing, that may but ſeem in the leaſt to maintain any of their phantaſies, then they crie out, This comes from the ſpirit of truth. So that whereas S.* Paul *ſaies, All Scripture is given by inſpiration, and is profitable*, &c. *theſe look onely upon that Scripture as divine, which will ſuite with their temper and errour.*

Irenæus lib. 3. cap. 2.

Ὅταν ῥηθῇ τι κατ' αὐτῶν, ἐὰν μὲν μηδὲν ἔχειν τὸ τοιοῦτον, &c. *Epiphan. hæreſ. 26.*

X. *Not the calumniating Antichriſtian* (as I may call them) *ſearchers of Scriptures*, who ſearch it, onely to oppoſe it. Such ſearchers were the Jews of old, who ſearched the Scriptures, that they might contradict Chriſt; as the *Phariſees* ſaid to *Nicodemus*, John 7. 52. *Search, and look, for out of Galilee ariſeth no Prophet.* Such ſearchers are the *Socinians* at this day, who are, indeed, *nice ſearchers* of the Scriptures, but it is to diſhonour Chriſt, and to rob him of the glorie of his *Divinitie*, and us of the comfort of his ſatisfaction: and if they can finde but the *leaſt title* or ἰῶτα, that ſeems

to favour their *blaſphemie*, they can crie up that, though in the mean time, they either wholly diſown, or elſe crie down as obſcure (as the late *Socinians* do *the Goſpel of S. John*) or elſe pervert and elude all others, that directly make againſt them. Me thinks, theſe are ſuch ſearchers, as *Herod* in *Matth.* 2.4. who ſent the *wiſemen to ſearch diligently* for Chriſt, under a pretence *to worſhip him*, but indeed it was to *kill him*: ſo theſe pretend high to honour Chriſt, but indeed in effect they deſtroy him, while they invent a few idle niceties to cheat him of his Divinitie. Theſe are ſuch ſearchers as the devil himſelf is, who knew how to quote ſcripture againſt Chriſt, as we may read in *Mat.* 4.

XI. And laſtly, *Not the contentious ſearcher of Scripture*, who ſearches it onely to finde out, and fill the world with a company of idle queſtions, impertinent and unneceſſary controverſies. Such as theſe the Apoſtle deſcribes 1 *Tim.* 6.4, 5. that they are *proud, doting about queſtions*, and *ſtrifes of words, whereof cometh envie, ſtrife, railing, evil ſurmiſings, perverſe diſputings of men of corrupt mindes*, &c. and from theſe the Apoſtle would have *Timothy* to *withdraw*. And theſe are none of the ſearchers which our Saviour here points at: and having viewed theſe, we are now to ſhew,

Secondly, *Poſitively, What kinde of ſearchers of Scriptures our Saviour would have.*

And they are theſe.

I. *The humble ſearcher*: one who comes to the ſearch of Scripture in a *real ſence* of his own *ignorance*; not puffed up with high thoughts, and conceits of his own knowledge. Pride & ſelf-conceit are great obſtructions to any knowledge, but moſt to a Scripture-knowledge. *If any man thinks he knows any thing, he knows nothing, as he ought to know*, 1 Cor. 8.2. Humilitie is moſt becoming a Chriſtian in the ſearch of Scripture, if he ſhall conſider,

1. The *depth of Scripture-myſteries* compared with the *ſtreightneſs and ſhallowneſs* of our underſtandings. In Scripture are revealed the *deep things of God*, , the *myſterie of the kingdome*, which *the natural man receiveth not*, 1 Cor. 2.14. Even in the ſearch of the nature of earthly things (where yet reaſon is in its proper ſphere) how ſhort and dark is it? The nature of the meaneſt creature puzzles, and puts to a *non plus*: not the leaſt, and moſt contemptible creature, but may teach us a modeſt humility, much more in the ſearch of theſe great myſteries. *Dic mihi formam lapidis*, ſo *Scaliger* to *Cardan*: we are puzzled in the forms of created, material compound Beings, and ſhall we proudly intrude into *Goſpel myſteries*, myſteries *hid from ages and generations*? we are all dark-

Col. 1.26

ſighted

ſighted in *natural things*, but ſtark blinde in *ſpiritual myſteries.*

2. God *commmunicates himſelf* in the ſearch of Scripture onely to *the humble*: he fills theſe *emptie veſſels*. *Eliah* bids the widow *get emptie veſſels*, that her *oyl might be multiplied*, 2 Kings 4.3. We muſt get veſſels *emptie of pride* and *ſelf-conceit*, if we would have our ſpiritual knowledge encreaſed, for *with the lowly is wiſdome*, Prov. 11.2. Obſerve we the promiſe in *Pſal.25.9. He will teach the humble*: and what our Saviour ſaith, *Mat.11.25. Thou haſt revealed theſe things unto babes*: that is, in their own opinion. Believe it for true, that, *to know your ignorance is a good ſtep to true and ſaving knowledge.*

3. *Without this humilitie we cannot entertain, and embrace Goſpel-truth.* Men puft up with a proud conceit of their own knowledge have often proved greateſt enemies unto the Goſpel: hence it ſeemed at firſt *to the Greeks fooliſhneſs*, 1 Cor. 1.23. It ſeemed abſurd to their reaſon to expect *life* and *ſalvation* by *a crucified Saviour. Pauls* preaching of the Goſpel ſeemed but babling to the *Epicurean*, and *Stoick* Philoſophers at *Athens*, Acts 17.18. And they were the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, men high and proud in their own conceits, which reject our Saviours perſon and doctrine. It is hard for men not to be puffed up with pride, and exalted above meaſure. *S. Paul* himſelf was in danger of it: *Galen* rejected the coctrine and profeſſion of Chriſtianity, becauſe he could not meet with *Mathematical demonſtrations* to prove every thing in it, as he did in other ſciences. It is the grace of humilitie makes men to ſubmit to the *ſimplicitie of the Goſpel*: *Receive with meekneſs the ingrafted word*, James 1.21. and it ſo received will help to ſave the ſoul.

II. *The reverent trembling ſearcher*, that, when he reads the Scripture, does it with an *holy aw and reverence of that God*, whoſe word it is, and of thoſe *myſteries of life and ſalvation by Chriſt*, which it diſcovers. This is the man God looks at: *Iſaiah 66.2. To him will I look that trembleth at my word.* One that fears, leſt by his own phantaſies and ignorance he may miſinterpret Scripture, or *wreſt it to his own, or other mens deſtructions.* This holy fear becomes eſpecially the Miniſters of the Goſpel in their ſearch of Scripture, that they do not, as *Spiders*, ſuck poiſon out of thoſe flowers to the poiſoning, and infecting of others. This does *S. Paul* urge upon *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 4.16. *Take heed unto thy ſelf, and thy doctrine; that thou mayſt ſave both thy ſelf and others*: intimating, that if he did not take heed, he might deſtroy both himſelf and others. Ye know how the *Beth-ſhemites* fared for their irreverent gazing into the Ark,

Ark, 1 *Sam.* 6.19. and ſo thou haſt cauſe to fear, who doeſt with an irreverent boldneſs ſearch into Scripture, without any *awfull thoughts* of the Majeſtie, and Myſteries of God. *Moſes* was to pull off the ſhoes off his feet, when he converſed with God, and heard his voice. When thou readeſt Scripture, thou haſt God ſpeaking unto thee; for it is *his voice*, *Heb.* 1.1. and therefore come with *reverent affections*. What the Apoſtle ſaies of ſpeaking, 1 *Pet.* 4. 11. *If any man ſpeak, let him ſpeak as the Oracles of God*; the ſame ſay I of *ſearching* into the Scriptures, and that beſpeaks reverence.

III. *The orderly ſearcher.* Order and method is great in the acquiring of *all knowledge*: *method* facilitates the *underſtanding*, and ſtrengthens the *memorie*; it makes things more *perſpicuous*, and ſo more eaſie to be underſtood, and more ſtrongly and certainly retained. That knowledge muſt needs be confuſed, which is gotten by *amethodical* ſtudie. *Method* demonſtrates the dependance of one thing upon another, and ſo makes all eaſie and facile. So that in *ſearch of Scripture* we ſhould not pick here and there a chapter, or verſe, but read in order; firſt the *eaſieſt*, and then the more *difficult*: for *paſcimur apertis, exercemur obſcuris*. *Milk* is eaſieſt for nouriſhment, and *ſtrong meat* to exerciſe our ſences with. Firſt therefore thoſe, that may *build us up in the faith*, as the Goſpels and Epiſtles, then what may exerciſe our parts and learning. I take it a prepoſterous way of *Scripture-ſearch*, which many take, to ſearch firſt into the Propheſies, Revelations, and the darker places of Scripture, and neglect the Epiſtles of the Apoſtles, and other eaſier places. It is in *Scripture-ſearch*, as in all other *ſciences*, there are ſome more eaſie, and obvious *principles*, and theſe firſt to be learned, before we go to deductions and the like. Firſt, let us go where the *lamb* may wade, and then where the *Elephant* may ſwim.

IV. *The judicious ſearcher*, that reads with judgement and underſtanding. As *Philip* ſaid to the *Eunuch*, when he was reading the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Acts 8.30. So ſay I to every ſearcher of Scripture, *Underſtandeſt thou what thou readeſt?* No profit by ſearching without underſtanding: therefore children and mad-men are no competent ſearchers of Scripture; there is required an act of *judgement* and *diſcretion*. Or if, as the *Eunuch*, thou underſtandeſt not, then conſult with thoſe that do. Read ſtill in obedience to God's command, (nay, let this double thy endevaours) but remember to conſult with the *Philips*, that is, the Miniſters of the word.

V. *The thankfull ſearcher*, who, when he reads the Scriptures, me-

meditates of and thankfully acknowledges the goodneſs of God, in giving and revealing to him the Scriptures. Chriſt himſelf eſteemed this thank-worthy, in Matth. 11. 25. *I thank thee, O Father of heaven*, &c. and how much more ſhould we do it in regard of our ſelves? if we ſhall but conſider,

1. What a great priviledge it is to a perſon or nation, to have the Scriptures, the word of God entruſted with them. This was the great priviledge of the Jews, which the Apoſtle takes notice of as their *greateſt advantage above the Gentiles*, Rom. 3. 1, 2. ἐπιστεύθησαν: He made them *Truſtees* of his word and promiſes. And the ſame would the Pſalmiſt have obſerved with thankfulneſs, *Pſalm* 147. 19.

2 How this is the onely light, which can lead us to heaven. This is the *cloud*, which will lead you through the wilderneſs unto *Canaan*: the light of nature is but *a groping* after God, *Acts* 17. For though *the inviſible things of God are clearly ſeen by the things that are made*, as we have it, *Rom.* 1. 20. yet cannot the knowledge by nature at all diſcover Chriſt: without which knowledge no ſalvation, if you credit our Saviour himſelf, *John* 17. 3. The Scripture is our onely ſtar to lead us unto Chriſt. The light of nature may lead men to hell and leave them there inexcuſable, but the light of Scripture can onely light us to heaven: *In them you think you have eternal life*, as our Saviour ſpeaks here.

3 If you conſider ſeriouſly, How many thouſands in the world ſit in darkneſs, left to the natural blindneſs of their corrupt hearts: How many are in *Egypt* while we are in *Goſhen*, *a land of light*. Looke abroad into the world, and ſee, what palpable darkneſs is the greateſt part of it overclouded with: and what fond guides do the moſt follow: The *Mahumetan* regulated and guided by a ridiculous *Alcoran*: the *Papiſts* enſlaved to fond and uncertain Traditions: the *Few* being left to his own hardneſs, refuſing the Goſpel, following a few Curious *Rabbines*: and many thouſands, *who never heard of the ſound of the Goſpel*, but are even *without God in the world*, *having their underſtandings darkened*, as it is *Epheſ.* 4. 18. while we enjoy the *clear light* of the glorious Goſpel, *to guide our feet into the waies of peace*. Obſerve we what God ſays to the Iſraelites, Deut. 4. 8. *What nation is there ſo great, that hath ſtatutes and judgements ſo righteous*, &c. Theſe make a nation great: ſo may we ſay; and ſo oft as we read, or hear the word of God, ſhould thankfully acknowledge it.

VI. *The Practical ſearcher*, who ſearcheth the Scripture: that he may thereby *regulate his life*, and *order his converſation aright*. It is one end why God hath given the Scriptures unto us, *Pſal.* 119.

9. It is as a rule to walk by: Galat. 6. 16. *As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them:* ſuch ſhould all ſearchers of Scripture be: for

1. Otherwiſe Scripture-ſearch will be in vain: it will be no otherwiſe profitable to us to know Scripture, if we do not live by it, then to aggravate our ſin, *Jam.* 4. and *to encreaſe our condemnation*, that we ſhall have *double ſtripes*, Luk. 12. 47. It is better to be mere Ideots and Dunces in Scripture, then not to live according to them; better had we never ſearch for theſe heavenly treaſures, and ſpiritual pearls, then when we have found them to trample them under our feet. We ſhould ſearch Scripture for that end, for which God gave it: and that the Apoſtle tells us, 2 *Tim.* 3. 17, is *that we might be throughly furniſhed unto every good work.* He truely ſearches the Scripture, who reſolves, what ever command he meets with, though never ſo contrary to his luſt, that he will obey it: therefore did the Prophet *David meditate in the law of God*, that he might make it *a light unto his feet*, Pſal. 119. 105.

2. No other ſearchers are like to finde the hidden treaſures of Scripture. God hath engaged to reveale himſelf to ſuch as theſe, *Joh*, 7. 16, 17. *If any one will do his will he ſhall know*, &c. and *David* gives this as an account of his great knowledge, *Pſal.* 119. 98. Nothing improves knowledge more then a ſuitable practiſe; & the true reaſon, why men finde no more in the ſearching of Scripture, is, becauſe they read it more out of curioſity then of Conſcience. It is grace in the heart, and obedience in the life, that makes men fruitfull in Scripture-knowledge: Conſider that Emphatical place in 2 *Pet.* 1. 5, 6. where the Apoſtle exhorts to a diligent acquiring, and practiſing of ſeveral graces, and gives the reaſon of it at ver. 8. *For if theſe things be in you, you ſhall not be barren, nor unfruitfull in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* The *Turke* writes upon his *Alcoran, Let none read this book, but he that is holy:* None are fit to be ſearchers of Scripture, but who either are or at leaſt reſolve to be holy.

3. Every ungodly and wicked man is really prejudiced againſt Scripture-light, and knowledge. *Joh.* 3. 19. *Light is come into the world, and men love darkneſs.* So many corruptions and luſts have all wicked men reigning in their hearts: ſo many real bolts and bars they have againſt the true Scripture-knowledge: it is irkeſome and troubleſome to them to entertain that truth which will diſcover their ſins, and ſo break and diſturb the ſecurity they have been in a long time: and therefore they rather with thoſe in *Job* deſire God *to depart from them.* As the Philoſopher obſerves ἀκροάσεις κατὰ τὰ ἤθη συμβαίνουσιν: men deſire a doctrine ſuitable to their corruptions: (and

Ariſt. Metaph. lib. 1.

this

this is the reaſon of that variety of doctrines and religions now in the world) which the doctrine of the Scripture will not in the leaſt comply with: and that is the true cauſe of mens averſeneſs from an effectual entertainment of the Goſpel: and of their ſhutting eyes againſt Scripture-light and convictions. The Philoſopher gives this as the reaſon, why young men are not fit ſcholars in morality: διὰ τὸ πάθος: *becauſe they are guided by luſt and paſſion*; and the Apoſtle gives the ſame reaſon, why ſome are *learning and never come to the knowledge of the truth*, becauſe *they are ſuch as are led about by diverſe luſts*, in 2 *Tim.* 3. 16, 17. That ſoul, which is reſolved to give up it ſelf unto obedience of the Scripture, is that which will readily embrace the doctrine of Scripture: becauſe inwardly complyant with, and conforming to the will of God. Whereas a wicked man, when he ſearches Scripture, he hath ſomething within him, that riſes up againſt the truths of God: a *carnal minde* within him, that is *enmity* to God, which diſputes the commands and quarrels with the truths of God. Α μανθάνομεν ποιεῖν, ποιοῦντες μανθάνομεν, ſaith the *Heathen*, that is, *What we learn that we may do, while we do it, we further learn it.* As knowledge muſt regulate our practiſe: ſo our practiſe will promote and increaſe our knowledge of the Scripture.

VII. *The praying ſearcher*, that interchangeably reads and prays. This the Wiſe-man directs unto, *Prov.* 2. 4, 5. *If thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her, as for hid treaſures: then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord*, &c. This is an excellent way ſure: for, as the Scriptures will afford us matter for our prayer, ſo prayer will lead us into the knowledge of the Scriptures. Searching ſcripture will enflame our zeal in prayer, and prayer will promote and facilitate our ſtudy of Scripture. *Moſes* when the Ark ſet forward, and when it reſted again, prayed devoutly, as we may read, *Numb.* 10. 35, 36. ſo when you ſet upon reading of the Scripture, and when you reſt from it, do it with prayer. S. *Auſtin* hath two remarkable ſtories to this purpoſe; One of *Antonius* the *Hermite*, who was ſo θεοδίδακτος, that he could, though he knew not one letter, fully underſtand, and by heart repeat the whole Bible: the other, of a certain ſervant converted from *Heatheniſme* to *Chriſtianity*: *Qui triduanis precibus obtinuit, ut codicem oblatum ſtupentibus qui aderant, legendo percurreret: who by praying three daies obtain'd of God that he read through the Bible, when offered him, to the amazement of them that were preſent.* This was it the Apoſtle directs unto: *If any want wiſedome, let him ask it of God*, Jam. 1. 5. and *David* practiſed, *Pſal.* 119. 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.* God infuſeth not knowledge into us by miracles immediately, as into the Apoſtles, but by the uſe of

Auguſt. præfat. ad lib. de Doct. Chriſt.

means: compare *Prov.* 2. 4, 6. The freeneſs of God in giving does not diſmiſs us from endeavouring: for though faith is ſaid to be *the gift of God*, Epheſ. 2. 8. yet it is ſaid alſo *faith comes by preaching*, Rom. 10. 17. Prayer is the way to come by the ſpirit, which diſcovers the depths, and treaſures of the Scriptures: *Luke* 11. 13. *Your heavenly father will give the holy ſpirit to them that ask him.* This is the onely key to unlock thoſe rich cabinets, wherein are contained thoſe precious jewels of ſaving truth and knowledge.

VIII. *The believing ſearcher:* and indeed without the eye of faith we are like to do little good in ſearching: the Goſpel is *an hidden thing* ſaith the Apoſtle *to them that periſh*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3. & who thoſe are you may ſee at verſ. 4. thoſe *who believe not.* They, who come not with faith, may ſearch into the letter, and hiſtorie of Scripture, but not into the myſtery and ſpirit of Scripture. The Apoſtle tells us, the Jews had *a veil upon their hearts*, and *their minds were blinded, while Moſes was read*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 14, 15. viz. the veil of unbelief, that they could not ſee through thoſe ceremonies, or thoſe clearer propheſies, which in the old Teſtament were made of Chriſt. So there is ſtill a veil of unbelief upon every natural mans heart, *which veil is done away in Chriſt*, ver. 14. viz. by faith in him, then God reveales himſelf to ſuch. God, when he manifeſted himſelf to *Moſes* put him into a rock, Exod. 33. 22. and this work reſembled Chriſt: God diſcovers himſelf, and his minde to thoſe who are in Chriſt by *faith. We have the minde of Chriſt*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 2. 16. that is, *we believers. Scriptura peculiaris eſt filiorum Dei ſchola*, ſaith *Calvin*, They are the onely good ſcholars, who read the Scriptures with *faith.* The Scriptures are *able to make perfect the man of God*, in 2 *Tim.* 3. 17. *The man of God: Nihil hic faciet filius hujus ſeculi*, ſaith *Muſculus.* A carnal heart will hardly be a proficient here.

IX. *The Chriſtian ſearcher:* He who ſearcheth Scripture that thereby he may come to know and enjoy Chriſt, and indeed without this all is in vain. The moſt curious, exact, learned ſearcher doth but ſearch them to his own deſtruction, if he doth not hereby come to a ſaving knowledge of Chriſt. *They teſtifie of me*, ſaith Chriſt, and therefore (or to this end) that you may know me, whom they teſtifie of, *Search.* In *ſearching* the Scriptures, ſearch, that you may *know* me. And this brancheth it ſelf into two parts.

Firſt, No knowledge of Chriſt without the Scriptures. The things that are ſeen may lead us to the inviſible things of God: that is, his eternal *God-head* and *power*, as it is in *Rom.* 1. 20. but theſe lead us not to the *knowledge* of Chriſt.

Secondly,

Secondly, The whole Scripture gives us a full teſtimony and diſcoverie of Chriſt: more *darkly* in the *Old*, more *expreſſely* in the *New Teſtament*. That teſtifies of Chriſt *to come*, this of Chriſt as *alreadie come*: *this* is but the fulfilling of *that*. Our Saviour here ſends theſe to the *Old Teſtament*, in which they were exactly verſed, ſo as *Joſephus* tells us, they could tell you *any word* in it, as readily as their *own name*. *All the Prophets ſpake of Chriſt*, as *Peter* tells the *Jews*, *Acts* 10.43. Three ways the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament ſpeak of Chriſt, which I rather mention, becauſe it is the chief *intereſt* of the Text, as alſo to *ſtrengthen* our *faith* in the *true Meſſiah* againſt the Jews: and hereby to admoniſh us in reading and ſearching them to look after Chriſt, and the knowledge of him.

Joſephus cont. Appion. l. 1.

I. By *promiſes*: as the *promiſed ſeed* to *Adam*, Gen. 3. to *Abraham*, Geneſ. 15. to *Iſaac*, Geneſ. 26. to *Jacob*, Geneſ. 28. to the *tribe of Judah*, Geneſ. 49. and all theſe are great aſſurances to our faith.

II. By *plain propheſies*. Chriſt is *Jacobs Shiloh*, in *Gen.* 49.10. *Balaams ſtar coming out of Jacob*, Numb. 24. 17. *Iſaiahs Immanuel*, Iſaiah 7. 14. *Daniels man, ſtanding before the Ancient of daies*, Dan. 7. 13. *Jeremiahs the Lord our righteouſneſs*, Jerem. 23. 6. *Zechariahs branch*, Zech. 3. 8. and *Malachies Sun*, Mal. 4. 2. And this in general: it would be infinite to deſcend to particulars: not a circumſtance of his *birth*, *life*, or *death*, but was foretold by ſome of the Prophets. The *place* of his *birth*, Micah. 5. 2. the manner of his *conception*, Iſai. 7.14. his *humilitie* and *povertie* of life, Zech. 9. his *death*, Iſai. 53. 7. *Judas's betraying* and *ſelling him for thirtie pieces of ſilver*, Zech. 11.12,13. his *ſcourging*, Iſai. 53. 5. his *being ſpit upon*, Iſai. 50. 6. his *crucifying among thieves*, Iſai. 53. 12. and after death his *reſurrection* and *aſcenſion*, Pſal. 110. and Hoſea 13. 14.

III. *In types and ſhadows*. The whole *Ceremonies* were nothing elſe but *ſhadows*: Chriſt the *ſubſtance*. Thus was Chriſts *paſſion* typified by the *Paſſover*, by the *Braſen ſerpent* lifted upon a pole, *John* 3. 14. His *taking away our ſins* by his death typified by the *ſcape goat*, Levit. 16. 10, 21. His *lying three days in the grave*, and *his reſurrection*, typified in *Jonah*, chap. 1. *The pillar of cloud*, and *of fire*, the *Red-ſea*, *Manna*, *Rock*, all types of Chriſt; of which latter, the Apoſtle ſpeaks expreſly, *that rock was Chriſt*, 1 Cor 10. 4. I have mentioned theſe, to lay an engagement upon you in ſearch of Scripture, eſpecially to look after Chriſt: he is the *ſcope*, and *ſubſtance*, and *center* of all Scripture. Doeſt thou read the *Ceremonies* of the old Law? look upon them as *ſhadows*, of which Chriſt is the *bodie* and *ſubſtance*. Doeſt thou read the Promiſes?

look upon them all, as *Yea and Amen in Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 1.20. Doeſt thou read the *Sacraments*? eye Chriſt as the thing *ſealed* by them. Doeſt thou ſearch the *Law*? Read it as thy *ſchool-maſter* to bring thee unto him, *Galat.* 3. 24. The *Propheſies*? Chriſt the fulfilling of them. Thus all the *lines* and *draughts* of Scripture meet in this *centre*: all Scripture *light* centres in *this Sun of Righteouſneſs*, without which, ſearch Scripture never ſo much, you are ſtill in the *dark*, if it be not your *ſtar* to lead you unto Chriſt.

And ſo much of the ſecond thing, *What ſearchers of Scripture Chriſt here points at.*

I come now to the third General,

The univerſality of the duty.

And this is two fold, { I. The *ſubject*, *All men.* / II. The *object*, *All the Scriptures.*

I. *The univerſalitie of the ſubject*, *All men*; none being exempted from this dutie. *Miniſters of the Goſpel* are eſpecially concerned in this, who are to diſpence the Myſteries of ſalvation unto others. It is an old and true ſaying, ſealed by the experience of all ages, that *Bonus textuarius eſt bonus Theologus*; *A good Scripturiſt is a good Divine*: and therefore does the Apoſtle give this eſpecially in charge to *Timothy*, *Till I come*, *give attendance to reading*, in 1 *Tim.* 4. 13. But, not onely theſe, *every Chriſtian* is concerned in this duty, if upon no other conſiderations, then theſe in the Text; they are abundantly evincing. Every Chriſtian is concerned in *eternal life*: Therefore, ought to ſtudie Scripture, which directs him the way thither; and it is therefore called *the word of life*, Philip. 2. 16. and, *the Goſpel of our ſalvation*, Epheſ. 1.13. As a traveller, that is ignorant of his way, will be oft conſulting his Maps, examining, and enquiring which is the way: we are all naturally ignorant of the true way to life, and therefore we muſt oft *ſearch Scriptures*, which are the Map of that *Jeruſalem*, *which is above*, directing us the way thither. So Chriſt is the *onely way*, out of of whom, no man can come thither, *John* 14. 6. And then, the *knowlege of Chriſt* is every Chriſtians *intereſt* and *concernment*. Hence are thoſe frequent exhortations of Scripture to Chriſtians, *To grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Pet. 3. 18. And this we come to by Scripture; *They teſtifie of me*, ſaith our Saviour in the Text. Beſides theſe, all are engaged to the ſearch of the Scriptures upon theſe accounts.

1. *In obedience to Divine command.* God exempts none from this dutie, *Deut.* 6. 6, 7, 8. but ſends all *to the law and teſtimony*, Iſai. 8. 20. and it is the Apoſtles frequent command, *Coloſſ.* 3. 16. and his charge is very ſhort, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 27. and what are all the *Elogiums*

giums; and *commendations* of thoſe who conſcienciouſly perform this duty, but ſo many *motives* and *arguments* for us to do it? Such are that character of a *godly man*, Pſal. 1. 3. that *he meditates in the law of God both day and night*: that commendation of the *Bereans*, who *ſearched the Scriptures*, Acts 17. 11. and that of *S. Peter* to whom he wrote, telling them, that *they did well in taking heed to that ſure word of propheſie*, 2 Pet. 1. 19. Therefore the neglect of this ſearching Scripture is a diſobedience to a Divine command.

2. *In conformitie to the practiſe of the Saints in all ages.* *Aquila* and *Priſcilla*, ordinary tent-makers, ſo well skilled in the Scriptures, that they were able to inſtruct an eloquent *Apollos*, Acts 18. 24, 25, 26. It ſpoke Gods approbation of the *Eunuchs* ſearching the Scriptures, when he ſent *Philip* to him, Acts 8. 28. *Timothy* was an apt ſcholar in this ſchool, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. inſtructed, queſtionleſs, not by his father (who was a *Greek*) but by his grand-mother *Lois*, and his mother *Eunice*, whoſe faith the Apoſtle highly commends, 2 *Tim.* 1. 5. whence it is obvious to collect the induſtrie of Godly women in thoſe times, in ſearching *themſelves*, and inſtructing *their children* in the Scriptures: a good copie for others to write after. Amongſt the Jews it was accounted a crime to have a family without a Bible; I wiſh it were ſo now.

3. *Thereby to promote the intereſt, and advantage of their own ſouls.* Hereby *(Chriſtians)* you may be inabled to *try the Spirits*, to diſcern *truth* from *falſhod*, and not ſo eaſily to be impoſed upon, or *toſſed about with every wind of doctrine*: hereby to *prove all things, that you may hold faſt that which is good*, 1 Theſſal. 5. 21. Hereby you may be *built up in the holy faith, ſtrenghned in the truth, quickned in holineſs*, and, in a word, *through faith be brought unto ſalvation*, as is intimated in that of our Saviour, *Johh* 20. 31. *Theſe things are written that you might believe, and that believing you might have life.* But a little more particularly, theſe are concerned in the ſearch of Scripture.

1. *Thoſe that are ignorant* to be *informed*, and *inlightned.* This is one uſe of Scripture to be *profitable*, πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, *for inſtruction*, 2 Tim. 3. 16. and the Apoſtle elſewhere tells us, that whatſoever was written afore was *written for our learning*, Rom. 15. 4. and this is it for which *David* ſo much extols the *Law* and *word of God* (both in *Pſal.* 19. and 119.) ſo frequently; confeſſing that by theſe commandments he was made *wiſer then his enemies*, verſe 98. that he had *more underſtanding then his teachers*, verſe 99. and ſo in many other particulars.

2. *The more learned and knowing Chriſtians, to be quickned and eſtabliſhed.*

ſtabliſhed. None are ſo learned, but may be ſcholars in the ſchool of Chriſt: none but may be *further informed*, or by oft ſearching the Scripture be *more ſtrengthned and confirmed. Deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 2.2. *Grow in grace, and grow in knowledge*, 2 Pet. 3.18. The word of God is not only *ſeed* to *beget* Chriſtians, but *milk* to *ſtrengthen* and *nouriſh* them. The *want of the word* is compared to a *famine*, *Amos* 8. 11. In a *famine*, when men have not a daily and *conſtant ſupply* of *bread*, the *ſtrength* and activity of their bodies *decay* and *languiſh*: ſo will it be in the ſoul; without a *daily ſupply* of this *Manna*, this *bread which comes down from heaven*, the Scriptures or word of God, there will be a *decay* in knowledge, and a *languiſhing* in our graces. The moſt knowing Chriſtian muſt ſearch the Scripture, to have his affections to Goſpel-myſteries *quickned* and *enflamed*, his *faith eſtabliſhed*, and his *memorie quickned*: what the Apoſtle ſaith of his writing to the *Philippians*, Phil. 3.1. *To write the ſame things for you it is ſafe*: and no leſs ſafe for the moſt knowing Chriſtian ſtill to be reading the ſame things again and again.

3. *Thoſe that are diſtreſſed Chriſtians to be comforted.* It was one end of writing the Scripture, that we *through patience of the Scripture might have hope*, *Rom.* 15.4. and therefore muſt be one end of our ſearching them: and *David* by experience found this true in *Pſal.* 19.8. where he ſaies, *The ſtatutes of the Lord are right, rejoycing the heart*: and very frequently in *Pſal.* 119. as that *the word was his comfort in his affliction*, verſe 50. that *Gods ſtatutes were his ſongs in the houſe of his pilgrimage*, verſe 54. that *the law was his delight*, verſe 92. and ſo in many other places, much to the ſame effect. And, indeed, here may we meet with ſupporting comforts, ſuitable to every condition. Here are examples of the *patience*, and *comforts* of the Saints in the like caſes. Art thou in *want* and *povertie*? Conſider *Daniel* preferring his courſe fare of *bread*, and *water* before the *kings portion*, Dan. 1. Art thou under *reproach*, and *affliction* for Chriſt? Conſider the Apoſtles *rejoycing*, that they were counted *worthy to ſuffer for Chriſt*, Acts 5.4. Art thou called to the *fiery trial*? Conſider the *three children* untouched in the midſt of the *furnace*. Art thou deſpoiled of *goods* and *children*? Conſider *Job* upon the *dunghil*. *S. Chryſoſtom* writing to *Cyriacus* the Biſhop, then in baniſhment, tells him how he was comforted in the like caſe; Εἰ μὲν θέλει τὴν Βασιλίσσαν ἐξορίσαι, ἐξορίσῃ με· τῆς Κυρίου ἡ γῆ καὶ τὸ πλήρωμα αὐτῆς, &c. *If the Empreſs* (ſaith he) *will baniſh me, let her; my comfort is, the earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs thereof. If ſhe will ſaw me aſunder, ſhe may: I fare no worſe then the Prophet Iſaiah. If ſhe will caſt me into the ſea: I have the the example of Jonah. If ſhe will*

Chryſ. ep. 125.

will caſt me into the fierie furnace, ſo were the three children caſt: If ſhe will caſt me to wilde beaſts, ſo was Daniel caſt into the den of lions, &c. Beſides all theſe encouraging examples, how many *gracious promiſes* are there upon record, which are *full breaſts* of conſolation, as it is in *Iſai.* 66. 11. a *metaphor* (ſaith *A Lapide* upon that place) taken from *crying children*, who are quieted by the breaſt: ſo are *perplexed Conſciences* by the promiſes. I have read of a woman, that was much diſquieted in conſcience, even to deſpair, endeavouring to be her own executioner, but was comforted with that place, *Iſai.* 57. 15. *For thus ſaith the high and loftie one, that inhabiteth eternitie, whoſe name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him alſo that is of an humble and contrite ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* And of another man, who being ready to dye, *Lord*, ſaith he, *I challenge thee by that promiſe*, Matth. 11. 28. *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavie laden, and I will give you reſt*; and ſo was comforted. Here is a *word of ſeaſon to him that is weary*, as in *Iſai.* 50. 4.

4. *The tempted Chriſtian*, for ſtrength againſt the *onſets* of Satan. Here a Chriſtian may meet with that *armour* by, which he may *quench the fierie darts of Satan*, Epheſ. 6. 17. *David* overcame *Goliah* with a *ſtone out of the brook*: and Chriſt Satan (not by his omnipotencie, as he might, but) by a *Scriptum eſt, It is written.* If Satan aſſault thee, this *ſpiritual Goliah*, take *one ſtone* out of this *brook*, a plain text of Scripture; thou mayſt conquer, and triumph over him. He enters the liſts diſarmed, that is ignorant of the Scriptures; χωρὶς ὅπλων εἰς πόλεμον καθίζωμεν, ſaith *Chryſoſtom.* Doth Satan ſet upon thee *by force?* Here is the ſpiritual *panoply*, the *whole armour of God*; eſpecially the *ſword of the Spirit* of which we may ſay (as he of *the ſword* of *Goliah*) *There is none like it.* Or doth he more cunningly endeavour to circumvent thee by his wiles, and ſubtleties? here thou mayſt be *ſo inſtructed, that thou ſhalt not* (as the Apoſtle ſaith) *be ignorant of his devices*, 2 Cor. 2. 11. that ſo you may eaſily countermine his plots. As he tempts to ſin, perhaps upon that ſuggeſtion, that *It is a little one:* but Scripture will tell thee, *Rom.* 6. 23. *The wages of ſin* (that is, of every ſin, and the leaſt) *is death.* He bids thee, *Do what others do*: but the Scripture ſaith, *Thou ſhalt not follow a multitude to do evil*, Exod. 23. 2. He bids, *Put of thy repentance; thou mayſt repent afterward*: but the Scripture ſaith, *Eſau* found *no place for repentance afterward*, although he *ſought it* with *tears.* He tells you, *You ſhall gain by ſin*: but the Scripture tells you, that this *ſeeming gain* will prove a *real loſs*, Matth. 16. 26. Or, that, *theſe ſins are full of pleaſure*; but the Scripture tells you, that thoſe *pleaſures of ſin* are but *for a ſeaſon*, in *Heb.* 11. 25.

Chryſoſt. Hom. 9. in Coleſſ.

and the *puniſhment* is *eternal*, *Mat.*25.46. And ſo much of the univerſalitie of the *ſubject*, that it concerns all to ſearch the Scriptures.

II. I come to the *univerſalitie of the object*, expreſſed indefinitely, τὰς γραφὰς, *the Scriptures*; as well the Law, as the Goſpel; as well the old Teſtament, as the New. The *Manichees* of old, and many of later daies, have refuſed the ſearch of the old Teſtament, as not uſefull, or neceſſarie to Chriſtians, under a *Goſpel-diſpenſation*. I ſhall therefore endeavour at this time to demonſtrate unto you the dutie of a *general* and *univerſal ſearch*, which lies upon all Chriſtians. If we had nothing, but this text of Scripture to confirm it, it were unanſwerable: our Saviour here ſpeaking of the old Teſtament, as is evident from the perſons to whom he directs this command, who were the Jews, enemies to the Goſpel, but great admirers of the old Teſtament, and diligent ſearchers into it. Now obſerve the argument, *In them ye think ye have eternal life*, therefore, *profitable*: and *they teſtifie of me*, therefore, *neceſſarie*: and all this is ſpoken ἐγκωμιαστικῶς, *by way of commendation* to the Jews, and therefore much more to Chriſtians; as *S. Chryſoſtom* obſerveth in his fourteenth *homilie* on the Goſpel of *S. John*, ὁ Κύριος τοὺς Ἰουδαίους παραινῶν τὰς γραφὰς ἐρευνᾶν, ὅπερ πλέον ἡμᾶς εἰς ζήτησιν ἐνάγει, *The Lord, exhorting the Jews to the ſearch of the Scriptures, does much more preſs us Chriſtians thereunto, even by their example.* But there are many other Scriptures, which demonſtrate unto us the uſefulneſs of the Scriptures of the old Teſtament, as *Rom.*15.4. ὅσα προεγράφη, *Whatſoever was written afore, was written for our comfort and inſtruction*; that is, what was written by the Prophets was written for the comfort and inſtruction of us Chriſtians. And again, *Eph* 2.20. You ſee the faith of the Chriſtian Church is built upon the foundation of the doctrine & writings, as well of the Prophets, as of the Apoſtles, both leading us to Chriſt, as to *that onely foundation*, 1 *Cor.* 3.11. viz. *of ſalvation*. Again, 2 *Pet*, 1.19. *To which* (that is, *that ſure word of propheſie*) *you do well that you take heed*: even that which was written before, by the Prophets, is as a light to direct you. And therefore obſerve, how *Abraham* diſpatcheth the *Gluttons* brethren to *Moſes* and *the Prophets*, Luke 16.29. whence it is obvious to collect, that the writings of *Moſes*, & *the Prophets* are to be read, heard, and aſſented to by Chriſtians under the Goſpel. To all which we may add that full place of our *Saviour*, Matth. 5.17.19. *I come not to deſtroy the Law or the Prophets*, &c. If Chriſt did not diſſolve them then certainly Chriſtians muſt not neglect to ſearch them: but *Chriſt* was ſo far from diſſolving, that he did fulfill them, and that in his doctrine, which was ſuitable, and conformable to that of the Law and the Prophets; in his life by obedience, exactly anſwering

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ing the commands of *the law*, and in his ſufferings to what *the law threatned*, and *the Prophets* had foretold. The reaſons then, why *Chriſtians* are to ſearch both, are theſe.

I. Becauſe *both are the voice of God to us.* The Apoſtle tells us expreſly that the ſame God, who *at divers times, and in divers ways ſpake to the fathers, hath in theſe laſt daies ſpoken alſo unto us*, Heb. 1. 1. both are *by divine inſpiration*, 2 Tim. 3. 16. *All Scripture is given*: not *this*, or *that*: and 2 *Pet.* 1. 21. *The propheſies of old time*, &c. what they wrote, they were God's *Amanuenſes*, and wrote not their *private phantaſies*, but the *dictates* of the *Spirit of God.* Holy men they were of God, and therefore their authoritie unqueſtionable and immutable, their value and uſe great and excellent. To the *moral law* we are all obliged, as a rule of our obedience, and though not to the obſervance of the *ceremonial*, yet to the knowledge and meditation of it, as very uſefull, both to acquaint us with the variety of God's diſpenſations, and by the comparing of thoſe ſhadows and types with Chriſt, the bodie and ſubſtance, they may be evidences of Chriſt already exhibited, and *come in the fleſh.* The conſulting all Scripture is both our intereſt, and duty, as having God the authour of it.

II. *The harmony, and identitie of Scripture doctrine both in the Old, and New Teſtament.* The ſame for ſubſtance, though different in degrees: the ſame object of faith, *viz.* Chriſt, to whom *all the Prophets witneſſed*, *Acts.* 10. 43. otherwiſe thoſe under that diſpenſation had been in a loſt, undone condition: for *Acts.* 4. 12. *There is no other name given under heaven, whereby men may be ſaved.* The Prophets repreſent Chriſt in his *perſon*, as *God* and *Man*, Iſai. 7. 14. In his *offices*, as a *Prophet*, Iſai. 42. 1, 2, 3. as a *Prieſt* Pſal. 110. 4. as a *King*, Pſal. 2. 6. and in all his benefits, as *Redemption* and *Salvation.* That in *Iſai.* 53. is a moſt pregnant teſtimony in our *juſtification by faith*, verſe 11. And both old and new Teſtament preſcribe the ſame holineſs, obedience, and love to God, and our neighbour. They differ indeed in the clearneſs of Revelation, not in the ſubſtance of the doctrine. The Goſpel takes off the veil, and lets us ſee the myſteries of Salvation more clearly. Now the argument is evident, that *if the doctrine of ſalvation be the ſame in both, then both are to be ſearched.*

III. Becauſe *all the Scriptures, both of old and new Teſtament, were written for the uſe, and good of Chriſtians.* The commands of the Law for our practiſe, as our Saviour told that Lawyer, *Luke* 18. 26, 28. *How readeſt thou in the law?* The promiſes for our comfort; as that promiſe which was peculiar to *Joſhua*, chap. 1. 5. is repeated to all Chriſtians, *Heb.* 13. 5. The threatnings and judge-

ments for our example and terrour: as the Apoſtle ſpeaking of the judgements which fell upon the Iſraelites, 1 *Cor.* 10. 6, 11, 12. So the types: obſerve how our Saviour applies the type of the *braſen ſerpent* to his *own death*, John 3. 14. and that for the comfort and *ſupport of our faith*, verſe 15. That, as he, who looked upon the *braſen ſerpent*, was healed of the ſtings of the *fiery ſerpents*; ſo they, that look up to Chriſt by a *true faith*, are healed of the *ſpiritual wounds* made by ſin and Satan.

IV. Becauſe of *the excellencie of all Scripture*, which the Apoſtle fully deſcribes to us in 2 *Tim.* 3. 16, 17. What are uſefull as *children* to know; what may *make us wiſe to ſalvation*; what is *profitable for doctrine* to inform us; for *reproof* to reclaim us; for *correction* to reform; for *inſtruction* to guide us, and *furniſh us unto every good work*. This the Apoſtle affirms univerſally of all Scripture, not of this, or that part of it; therefore of the *old*, as well as *new Teſtament*.

V. *To ſtrengthen and confirm the doctrine of the new Teſtament*; to which both Chriſt and the Apoſtles oft ſend Chriſtians, and blame them for their ignorance in them, *Luke* 24. 25. *Then he ſaid unto them, O fools, and ſlow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken*, &c. Therefore it was the conſtant practiſe of Chriſt and his Apoſtles to aſſert their authoritie, and confirm their doctrines by the *old Teſtament*; as in the Text here: and he grounds theſe Jews unbelief upon their not believing *Moſes*, verſe 46, 47, *For had ye believed Moſes, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me: But if ye believe not his writings, how ſhall ye believe my words?* Where Chriſt confirms his doctrine by *Moſes*, who wrote of him. This was the Apologie *S. Paul* made for himſelf, and his doctrine, in *Acts* 26. 22. So our Saviour proves the doctrine of the *reſurrection* by *Moſes*, Matth. 22. 31. and the doctrine of his *ſufferings* and *reſurrection*, Luke 24. 44, 45. And the truth is, much of *Goſpel-doctrine* can neither be underſtood, nor proved without the old Teſtament: as that of the Iſraelites in 1 *Cor.* 10. 1, 2, 3, 4. whence ſhould Chriſtians underſtand that, but out of the hiſtorie of *Moſes*, of the *Manna*, the *cloud*, the *ſea*, and the *rock*; and eſpecially, the epiſtle to the *Hebrews* without an exact knowledge of the *legal ſacrifices*, *prieſthood* and the like; and the lives of the *Patriarchs* mentioned, *Heb.* 11.

VI. And laſtly, *To convince the Jews of the truth of Chriſt our Meſſiah, and ſatisfie Chriſtians in their temptations concerning it*: as the *fulfilling of the Propheſies*, the *realizing of the Types* concerning Chriſt. This *Apollos* found to be the moſt convincing way to confute the Jews, *Acts* 18. 28. And there is no other poſſible way to effect

effect this: for the *New Teſtament* they reject. *Reaſon* is no competent judge, and cannot fathom the depths and myſteries concerning Chriſt, nor judge of the *true Meßiah*; nor can you convince them by the *miracles of Chriſt*, for they deny them, or elſe impute them to *Beelzebub*. If we would convince them then, we muſt build upon ſome *Principles*, which they grant, otherwiſe they deny the whole: therefore the only way to convince them is, to ſhew the *conformitie* and *agreement* of all Chriſts *doings* and *ſufferings* to what the *Prophets* of old foretold of the *true Meßiah*. Which courſe our Saviour himſelf took to prove himſelf the *true Meßiah*, Luke 24. 44. and therefore the ſearch of the old Teſtament is much conducible to the *ſtrengthning of our faith in Chriſt* againſt the Jews. For when we conſider the exact Propheſies of the time of *Chriſts coming*, Gen. 49.10. and *while the temple ſtood*, Hag. 2.7. *the place of his birth*, by *Micah*, chap. 5. verſe 2. *born of a virgin*, Iſai. 7.14. *the miracles to be wrought by him*, Iſai. 35. 5, 6. *his paſſion and ſufferings*, Iſai. 53. theſe are ſufficient, when we finde them ſo punctually fulfilled in Chriſt, to *ſtrengthen our faith* in him, and to convince the Jews of their deſperate unbelief: therefore thoſe, who deny Chriſtians the uſe of the old Teſtament, rob them of their weapons, whereby they ſhould contend for the faith, and fight againſt the enemies of Chriſt, the Jews.

Fourthly, *The grounds of this ſearch.*

And theſe I ſhall reduce to theſe four heads.

I. *The Scripture-fulneſs and ſufficiencie:* and this is clear in the words of the Text: *In them you may have the knowledge of Chriſt*, and *eternal life:*

Where we may conſider,

1. It is *a full and perfect foundation of faith*, as *containing all things neceſſarie to be believed*, either *expreſly*, or *by convincing, and undeniable conſequence*. So full and perfect it is, that it needeth not to be eeked out with *unwritten traditions*, or *pretended enthuſiaſmes*, and *revelations*. That *tradition*, which brings down, and conveys Scripture-truth to us through the *ſucceſsive ages* of the Church, we cannot caſt out, but acknowledge as an eminent inſtance, and teſtimony of Gods Providence: and in this ſenſe the Church is called στῦλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας, 1 Tim. 3.15. *the pillar and ground of truth. In ſenſu forenſi*, &c. Not that it contributes *authority* to them. And in this ſence *S. Auguſtines Non credidiſſem* may go for good and currant Divinitie, becauſe we could not have had them elſe. So for *revelation*; we acknowledge *a ſpiritual revelation to underſtand*, which the Apoſtle prays for, *Epheſ.* 1.17. but any thing additional to Scripture-truth, we reject, as detracting from the wiſdome of

God, and his *revealed truth.* Obſerve we what the Apoſtle ſaith, *Gal.* 1.18. *If we or an angel from heaven preach any other doctrine.* He does not ſay, *Contra, againſt,* but *præter, beſide,* ſaies *Paræus.* Here is enough to bring you to ſalvation; elſe *S. John* was out, who tells us, *Theſe things are written that you might believe, and believing might have life,* John 20.31. and if not ſufficient, we may ſay, as the diſciples, *Matth.* 26. 8. *To what purpoſe all this?* but when God himſelf ſends us, *To the Law, and to the Teſtimony,* Iſai. 8.20. and *Abraham* ſends the *rich man's* brethren to *Moſes,* and *the Prophets;* Luke 16.29. it intimates that here is enough, which if known and practiſed, is able to keep them out of hell.

2. *A full and perfect rule of righteouſneſs.* No duty, which can concern any man in any relation, either to God or man, but you may have full direction for it in the Scripture. Thoſe three words of the Apoſtle ſpeak the whole duty of a Chriſtian, σωφρόνως, δικαίως, and εὐσεβῶς, *ſoberly, righteouſly,* and *godly,* Tit. 2.11,12. When the Lawyer came to tempt our Saviour with that queſtion, *What ſhall I do to inherit eternal life?* our Saviour ſends him to the Scripture; *What is written in the law? How readeſt thou?* Obſerve we what *Wiſdome* ſaith, *Prov.* 1.9. *My ſon, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee: Then ſhalt thou underſtand righteouſneſs, and judgement, and equitie, yea, every good path.* Art thou a Magiſtrate? Scripture tells thee how thou muſt rule, in 2 *Sam.* 23. 3. *He, that ruleth over men, muſt be juſt, ruling in the fear of God.* Art thou a Father? Scripture directs thee in that relation to thy children, *To bring them up in the nurture, and admonition of the Lord,* Epheſ. 6.4. Art thou a childe? Scripture tells thee how to carrie thy ſelf in that relation, *Epheſ.* 6. 1, 2. *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right,* &c. Art thou a ſervant? Scripture tells thee how to behave thy ſelf in that condition, *Epheſ.* 6. 5, 6. *Servants, be obedient to them that are your maſters according to the fleſh,* &c. Art thou a Maſter of a family? Scripture ſhews thee how to behave thy ſelf in that relation, *Epheſ.* 6.9. *And ye, Maſters, do ye the ſame things unto them, forbearing threatning,* &c. In a word, here is direction for every Chriſtian in every condition and relation, in which the Scripture is able *to make him throughly perfect,* 2 Tim. 3. 17. Nay, it is ſo perfect a rule, that the moſt *ſpecious obſervances,* and moſt *glorious performances,* and moſt *exact works,* are no way acceptable unto God, if not commanded in, and regulated by this word. They may have λόγον σοφίας ἐν ἐθελοθρησκείᾳ, *a ſhew of wiſdome in will-worſhip,* as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Coloſſ.* 2. 23. to *the pleaſing of men,* but not to *the glory of God.* God gave

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Moſes a pattern for making the Tabernacle, and *David* of the Temple: God hath ſet us a *perfect rule* of *worſhip* and *holineſs* in his word, and nothing pleaſeth him, but what is *according to that rule.* When our Saviour told *the woman of Samaria,* John 4. 22. *We know what we worſhip: We,* that is, the Jews: the ground ſure was, becauſe the Jews had a *particular appointment* of God for their worſhip, which the *Samaritanes* had not. Therefore nothing muſt be impoſed upon Chriſtians, as obligatory to conſcience (though ſomething for order, and decencie, 1 *Cor.*14.40.) as Divine commands, or as the immediate worſhip of God, or as duties eſſentially neceſſary in order to ſalvation. This is juſtly abhorred, as the Tyranny of the Church of *Rome,* and as an infringement of Chriſtian libertie, and as a detracting from the perfection of the word of God. *Non ex arbitrio Deo ſerviendum eſt, ſed ex imperio.* What *Tertullian* ſaith of the Heathen worſhip, I ſhall ſay of all will-worſhip, which is beſides the word of God: *Ex religione ſuperſtitio compingitur, & eò irreligioſior, quantò Ethnicus paratior.* Men in this caſe are laborioufly ſuperſtitious, and take a great deal of pains to be irreligious. It ſeems to be a ſtrange expreſſion, *Hoſ.*8.14. *Iſrael hath forgotten his maker, and buildeth temples*; but ſure the reaſon is, becauſe God had appointed but *one Temple.* To be righteous without, or beyond the word of God, is to be righteous overmuch and to make our ſelves over-wiſe, indeed wiſer then God himſelf: which is forbidden, *Eccleſ.* 7. 16. *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy ſelf over-wiſe: why ſhouldeſt thou deſtroy thy ſelf?* To offer to God obſervances, not preſcribed in his word, is but with *Nadab* and *Abihu* to offer *ſtrange fire* unto the Lord, *Levit.* 10.1. *ſtrange,* becauſe God had not commanded it. The uſe whereof, before we paſs further, ſhall be,

Firſt, *An encouragement to ſearch.* What encouragement muſt it be to men to dig in a mine, when they may finde a *fulneſs* of what may ſupply all their *neceſsities*: there is ſuch a fulneſs in *Scripture-mines.* Doeſt thou want *information in matters of faith?* Here is a fulneſs of *Saving truth.* Or, doeſt thou want *direction* for thy *life,* and *walking with God?* here is a *perfect rule of holineſs.*

Secondly, When you have ſearched it, *walk according to this rule.* Take the word of God to regulate your lives by; this is an evidence and note of a true, upright, ſincere Chriſtian, to take the word of God as his rule. So *David* deſcribes them, *Pſal.* 119. 1. *Bleſſed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord*; that is a note, that they are undefiled, upright, and ſincere. This evidenced *Jobs* uprightneſs, *Job* 23.10,11,12. And yet how few walk

walk by this rule: ſome by *the faſhions of the world*, *cuſtome*, and *example* of others, *education*, the *invention of men*, and the like: but *David* had another rule, *Pſal* 119. 113. *I hate vain thoughts, but thy law I love.* And there is a *new*, lately unheard of, *generation*, now ſtart up, who neglecting the Scriptures pretend to be wholly led and guided by a *light within them.* Let us (if you think it worth the while) examine this opinion, and I think it may be confuted ſufficiently by *Mat.6.23. If the light that is in thee be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs?* Whence theſe things are obvious to be collected.

1. *That it is poſsible the light within a man may be darkneſs:* as the light, which the Heathens had within them, was, who had *their underſtanding darkned*, Epheſ. 4.18. and as the light of every *natural man* is, 1 *Cor.* 2.14.

2. *That if it be ſo, it is a miſerable darkneſs.* Τὸ σκότος πόσον; *How great is that darkneſs?* that is, he that followeth ſuch a light is in a lamentable, deplorable condition; as he that followeth the light of ſome Meteor in the night, which leads him into ditches.

3. *This light within* (as being every mans pretence, and in moſt men a falſe light, and in one contrary to another) *muſt be tryed:* and then preſently, it ſuppoſeth ſome certain rule, by which it muſt be tryed, (otherwiſe, we ſhall never be ſecured from deluſion and errour) and this rule can be no other, then the *infallible word* of God. All that light is darkneſs, which is not lighted at the Lamp of Scripture: ſo the Prophet *Iſaiah* tells us expreſly, *Iſai.* 8. 20. *If they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.* Therefore as *David*, ſo all Chriſtians ſhould walk by that light, *Pſal.*119.105.

4. If this opinion ſuppoſeth a light naturally ſet up in every mans ſoul, which by following its direction may bring them to heaven, then *this is plain down right Pelagianiſme*, and ſpeaks the grace of God needleſs, and tells God that he was at an unneceſſary expence of wiſdome and mercy, when he gave us Scripture, which the Apoſtle tells us is *onely able to make us wiſe unto ſalvation*, in 2 Tim.3.15.

5. *God hath no where commanded us to walk by any ſuch rule, as a light within.* By the Prophet *David* he ſends us to *his word*, Pſal. 119.9. *Wherewith ſhall a young man cleanſe his way, by taking heed according to thy word*: and *S. Paul* would have all walk by the *ſame rule*, Phil.3.16.

6. Suppoſe it a *true law and light, an effect of regeneration*, yet not a *rule*, becauſe *imperfect*: for ſtill the Prophet remits us to that law *written in the volume of the book of God*, Pſal. 40.7,8. and by

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it, it does evidently appear, that there is no *law* or *light* within the heart, to be accounted of, but what is agreeable with, and conſonant to the law *written in the volume of the book*. But however, be it what light it will be, which theſe pretend to walk by; I ſhall demonſtrate to you, that thoſe are not in *the light*, but in *darkneſs*, from 1 *John* 2.8,9,10. And certainly into the number of thoſe, whom the Apoſtle there mentions, it is no uncharitableneſs to put theſe, whoſe conſtant practiſe is to ſpit hell and damnation in every mans face, though ſuch as walk holily and unblameably.

But you will ſay, *Is not every man concerned to follow the light, and inward guidance of his own conſcience?* I anſwer, No, unleſs his conſcience be rightly informed, and regulated by the word of God. For conſcience is but *Regula regulata*: and though he cannot diſobey a *falſe light* of conſcience without ſin, ſo nor follow it without ſin neither: ſo that the obligation, which an erroneous conſcience lays upon a man, is not to act contrary to it; but he ought to get that falſe light extinguiſhed, and his conſcience better informed, and a true light ſet up from the word of God. Notwithſtanding this therefore, and all other pretended lights or rules, contrary to, or beſides this: I ſhall cloſe this argument with that of the Apoſtle, *Gal.6.16. As many as walk according to this rule, Peace be on them, and the Iſrael of God.*

The ſecond argument or ground for *Scripture-ſearch* is *Scripture plaineneſs and perſpicuity*. It is the deſire and plot of the Church of *Rome*, to faſten an imputation of obſcurity upon the Scripture, that hereby ſhe may with the more plauſible pretence exalt *Peters* pretended ſucceſſour in the infallible chair, as an unerring interpreter; and alſo diſcourage the people from reading them, as perſwading them, that the treaſure lies too deep for them to finde, and therefore it is to no purpoſe for them to ſearch: but this is to bring a falſe report upon the Scripture, as the ſpies did upon the *land of Canaan*. All truths neceſſarie to ſalvation are plainly laid down in Scripture: whence the Scripture is ſo oft compared to *a light*; as in *Pſal.*119. and *Prov.6.* Indeed, here we muſt diſtinguiſh between the *myſteriouſneſs* and *obſcurity* of the things revealed, and the manner of the revelation. Scripture-myſteries indeed are obſcure and deep, in which reſpect *S.Peter* obſerved δυσνόητά τινα, *ſome things hard to be underſtood*, in *S. Pauls* epiſtles, 2 *Pet.* 3.16. but the revelation of theſe myſteries are plain to thoſe that uſe the means; as *devout prayer, ſerious meditation, frequent reading*, and the like. This is that, which *David* ſaith, *Pſal.* 119.129. *Thy teſtimonies are wonderfull*; there is the myſtery: but in verſe

130. *The entrance of thy word giveth light*; there is the perſpicuity. Some things are leſs plain *ob futuritionem*, becauſe they *foretell things to come*, as Propheſies: and ſome *ob majeſtatem*, for the *loftineſs of them*, as, to inſtance; The myſterie of the Trinity is incomprehenſible, yet moſt plainly revealed in 1 *John* 5. 7. what greater myſtery then for God *to take fleſh?* for a childe to *be born of a virgin?* yet theſe moſt clearly revealed in Scripture: 1 *John* 1.14. and the other, *Luke* 2.6,7. Thus that, which is *obſcurely inſinuated* in one place, is *clearly revealed* in another, at leaſt in thoſe things that be abſolutely neceſſary to ſalvation; for to *this very end it was written*, John 20.31. Yet Scriptures are dark, and obſcure as to us.

Nihil continetur fidei neceſſarij, quod Scriptura per ſenſum literalem alicubi non manifeſtè tradit. Aquin *p.1.q.1.a.10.*

1. Becauſe of *our pride*: and though God be ſaid to *reſiſt the proud*, yet *he teaches the humble*, Pſal.25.9.

2. Becauſe of *mens unbelief.* 2 *Cor.* 4.3. *The Goſpel is hid to them that are loſt.* So that while men are in a *ſtate of unregeneracy*, they are (amidſt all their acquired kowledge) in the dark, as to any true ſaving knowledge of *Scripture-myſteries*; they have no reliſh of theſe things. A carnal eye cannot ſee thoſe things which *eye hath hath not ſeen*, they being *the things of the Spirit*; therefore Chriſt councels us to buy of him *eye-ſalve*, Revel. 3.18. without which we can ſee but little. The cloud was light to the *Iſraelites*, but dark to the *Egyptians*: ſo is the word of God, light to the true *Iſraelites*; that is, believers, but dark to unbelievers; the dark ſide of the cloud is towards them, who are converſant onely in the letter.

3. Becauſe *of our weakneſs and infirmity*. The myſteries of the Goſpel are profound; our capacities but ſhallow: we may ſay of them, as *the woman of Samaria* ſaid of *Jacobs well*, John 4. *It is deep, and we have not to draw with.*

4. Becauſe of our *curioſity*; as not content to know onely what God hath revealed.

5. Becauſe of *our idleneſs and careleſsneſs in ſearching. Difficultas non eſt ex re ipſa, ſed ex noſtra oſcitantia*, ſaies *Paræus*. He that rides poſt cannot take a map of the countrey he rides through: ſo he that makes too much haſt in reading the Scriptures cannot take an exact account of them. To the beſt, by reaſon of the remainders of their natural blindneſs, it is not ſo plain, as it is in it ſelf; therefore Scripture is more perſpicuous to ſome, then to others: ſome are better ſcholars then others in this ſchool, according to the means of *grace* God hath beſtowed upon them, *Epheſ.* 4.7. and according to the *diverſity* of the Spirit working in *opening their eyes*: but they who underſtand moſt, have reaſon to ſay with the Apoſtle,

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We know but in part, 1 *Cor.*13.9. and to pray with *David*, Pſal.119. 18. *Open thou mine eyes.*

The uſe of this will be two-fold.

Firſt, *Here we learn the unexcuſableneſs of mens ignorance of Scripture.* Thou can'ſt not pretend, that it doth not concern thee; for Chriſt hath bidden thee, *ſearch* it: nor yet make the obſcurity of it a plea, for all ſaving truths lies obvious and plain in it. There is indeed *ſtrong meat* for *grown Chriſtians*; but here is *milk* too for *Babes* in knowledge: here are myſteries to exerciſe the acuteſt wits, depths for the profoundeſt judgements: but what may make thee *wiſe to ſalvation* is ſo plain, that a man of the meaneſt capacitie may apprehend it: therefore (eſpecially, amidſt ſo many means of knowing it, as publick reading, and preaching) the ignorance of it in any is inexcuſable.

Secondly, *Pray to God for the Spirit to be your teacher in theſe Goſpel-myſteries*: that you may all *be taught of God*, as it is in *John* 6.45. Without this you will be in the dark, and grope at noon-day. The Sun is moſt perſpicuous, yet we cannot ſee it without its own light: the *things of the Spirit* revealed in Scripture are clear and perſpicuous in themſelves, but will not be ſo to us, without the *light of the Spirit*. There is indeed an *external* perſpicuity of Scripture in the words; this may be made out to the worſt of men by the improvement of natural abilities, and by accompliſhment of Arts; nay, the devils may have a clear underſtanding of this: but then there is an *internal* perſpicuity of Scripture, evidenced to the ſoul by the enlightning of the Spirit of God ſhining into the heart, ſo irradiating the minde with a Divine light, that it ſees through the veil of the letter, and diſcovers the myſtery of the word. This light conveys an experimental taſte, and a ſweet reliſh of the truths of the word of God. In a word, the Scripture is plain, though we want light to ſee it; the Sun may ſhine, though a blinde man cannot perceive it: but now the Spirit brings a ſuitable light into the ſoul, proportioned to theſe Scripture-truths, which were indited and can onely be evidenced by the Spirit, in 2 *Cor.*4.6. and Prayer is the way to come by the Spirit, *Luke* 11.13. *How much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the Spirit to them that ask him.*

The third argument for *Scripture-ſearch* is *Scriptures authority*, which is divine and infallible. *S. Paul* affirms, that it is of *divine inſpiration*, in 2 *Tim.* 3.16. and it is ſaid to be *a more ſure word of propheſie*, by *S. Peter*, 2 *Pet.* 1.19. And herein I ſhall demonſtrate this one thing,

That theſe Scriptures are the word of God.

That theſe *Scriptures are the word of God*, I ſhall not trouble you

with a multitude of arguments to evince it, but yet I could not wholly omit it; becauſe all, who do profeſs it, do not really and fully believe it (as I ſhall evidence to you anon) and the faith of many Chriſtians, through the ſtrength of Satans temptations, and the corruption of their own hearts, may ſometimes doubt of it: that I may therefore convince ſome, and ſtrengthen others, I ſhall preſent to you theſe conſiderations.

I. *The teſtimony of the Church is not the firſt or chief ground, nor is it a ſufficient argument of that faith whereby we believe the Scriptures to be the word of God.* Into this indeed the Church of *Rome* doth ultimately reſolve its faith. *Bellarmine* openly profeſſes that, *He would believe the Bible no more then the Alcoran, if it were not for the teſtimony of the Church.* It is true, the outward teſtimony of the Church may be a motive, or a means of our belief of the Scripture, for ſo ſhe is called *the pillar and ground of truth*, to hold it forth, and declare it; as the pillar holds forth the Princes Proclamation, but adds no authoritie to it. It may inform us of the truth, but not perſwade us of the truth. The Church hath the charge of Scripture, ἐπιστεύθησαν, *the Oracles of God being committed to her*, (as it is ſaid of the Jewiſh, *Rom.* 3. 2.) as a *Truſtee* of Divine truth, to maintain, uphold, expound, and declare Scripture; but not the firſt ground of our belief of it. As the Queen of *Sheba* believed the report of *Solomons* wiſdome by others, but more when ſhe heard it her ſelf: or as the *Samaritans* believed, becauſe of the report of the woman, but more when they heard him, *John* 4. 30, 40. The Church may hand the Scriptures to us, and we may believe them by, but not for the teſtimony of it. Or, as a mother may ſhew the childe the ſun, and tell him, *that is the ſun*, but yet the ſun manifeſts its ſelf by its own light: ſo the Church may tell us, this is Scripture, but it is impoſſible, that the ultimate reſolution of a divine faith of *ſupernatural truths* ſhould be made into any humane, and ſo conſequently fallible, and uncertain teſtimony, when as we are to judge of the *true Church* by the Scripture. Nor can this be a conviction to any, that the Scriptures are the word of God: for either it muſt be to believers, and to them it is unneceſſary, for they have already effectually entertained it upon other grounds, *viz. The inward evidences of the word*, and *Teſtimony of the Spirit*: and it cannot be to unbelievers, for they reject the *Church* as well as the *Scripture*; and therefore they muſt be convinced of the *true Church*, before they will admit its teſtimony: and of this there is no other poſſible means to convince them, then by the Scriptures, which muſt be firſt evidenced unto them: Therefore,

II. They

II. *There are in Scripture ſufficient evidences and convictions, even to ingenuous reaſon, that it is the word of God.* And this is neceſſary; for though, after any teſtimony appears to be Divine, reaſon muſt not be ſuffered to diſpute and queſtion the thing ſo atteſted: yet I cannot ſee, why reaſon ſhould not be uſed, as an inſtrument or means to evidence ſuch a Revelation to be divine; otherwiſe (though I may be otherwiſe convinced my ſelf) it is impoſſible to convince an Heathen, or gainſayer, that *this is the word of God.* Our faith is not irrational, and though the things revealed be above reaſon, yet that it is ſupernaturally revealed, muſt be evidenced to reaſon; otherwiſe my belief is raſh, precipitate, and irrational; nor can I *give a reaſon of the hope that is in me*, as the Apoſtle requires, 1 *Pet.*3.15. Therefore (omitting thoſe which I conceive leſs evincing) I ſhall lay down theſe few conſiderations to evidence this.

1. Conſider *the ſublimitie of, and myſteriouſneſs of the things revealed in Scripture*; ſuch as the moſt prying reaſon could never ſearch into, nor the moſt improved, raiſed parts and abilities ever reach; ſuch as the Philoſophers never dreamt of: ſuch is *the fall of man*, and *our corruption by it*, of which if the Philoſophers had ſome ruder notions, yet *the means of mans ſin and miſery*, viz. by the *wilfull tranſgreſſion* of that *Covenant*, made between God and man, of not *eating of the tree of knowledge*, &c. this they were wholly ignorant of; and much leſs could reaſon fathom the depth of that Wiſdome and Mercy which Scripture diſcovers in *mans recovery* by Chriſt; this is a depth which the very Angels deſire, παρακύψαι, in 1 *Pet.* 1.12. *to look earneſtly into.* That *Apoſtatized, fallen, miſerable man ſhould again be brought to life by the death of the onely Son of God; and that in a way of ſuch unſpeakable wiſdome, and ſecurity to all the attributes of God, with ſuch a full reconcilement of juſtice and mercy*, is a myſterie reaſon can ſcarce apprehend now it is revealed, much leſs diſcover, and finde out at firſt. So *God's entring into Covenant with lapſed man; an Unity in Trinity; Redemption by the bloud of Chriſt; Regeneration by the Spirit* (you know *Nicodemus's* reaſon was *non-pluſs'd* here, with a *Quomodo? How can this be*, John 3.) *Reſurrection of the body*, being crumbled into duſt: *A laſt judgement*, before the tribunal of that Chriſt, who was crucified here: theſe are things which the *eye of reaſon* could never have diſcerned, and which the moſt acute profound Philoſophers knew nothing of.

What Plato *knew of God, it is very probable, he had from* Moſes, *of whom he was very ſtudious*, if we will believe *Clemens Alexandrinus*. S. *Auguſtin* confeſſeth, when he had diligently peruſed *Pla-* S. *Auguſt. l.7. C.21. confeſs.*

to, he found nothing of our *miſerie by ſin*, and *recovery by Chriſt*: nothing of *the blotting out the hand-writing of Ordinances by the blood of Chriſt*. *Hoc illæ literæ non habent*, ſaith he. He could finde none there crying out with *S. Paul*, *Quid faciet miſer homo?* &c. What ſhall miſerable man do? Who ſhall deliver him? None crying out, *Thanks be to God through Jeſus Chriſt*: yet ſaith he, *Hæc mihi inviſcerabantur miris modis, cùm minimum Apoſtolorum tuorum legerem*, &c. *Lord, theſe truths were incorporated in me, when I read the leaſt of thy Apoſtles.* And truely, one end of Gods giving us Scripture was to ſupply the defect of reaſon. This conſideration will yet be more valid, if you conſider whom God was pleaſed to make uſe of, as inſtruments, to convey theſe myſteries to us: not an eloquent *Tully*, profound *Plato*; but *Amos* an *Heardſman*, *David* a *Shepheard*, *Paul* a *Tent-maker*, and many of the Apoſtles poor *fiſhermen*; men no waies enabled by acquired parts. *Moſes* indeed was *learned in all the wiſdome of the Egyptians*, Acts 7. 22. but there he could not learn the Law and Truths of God, where Idolatry was ſo much overſpread. So *Paul* was *brought up at the feet of Gamaliel*; but there he did not learn the myſteries of the Goſpel, but during that time he thought himſelf bound to blaſpheme the truth, and to perſecute the Profeſſours of the Goſpel, which himſelf afterwards preached. *Matthew*, a Publican, made a Pen-man of the Scripture. All which ſpeak as the admirable wiſdome and omnipotent power of Gods grace, in conquering their hearts to a cloſing with the Goſpel, ſo Gods revealing theſe things unto them, and in an extraordinary manner furniſhing them, and acting them by his Spirit, to write the Scriptures.

2. *The exactneſs of Scripture-holineſs*: ſuch as you ſhall meet with in no humane writings; *faith purifying the heart*, *working by love*. What exact patterns and examples does Scripture hold forth of Purity and Holineſs? *Enoch walking with God*: *Abraham the friend of God*: and *David a man after Gods own heart*. What ſtrict laws does it preſcribe? whereas Humane laws tolerate ſome ſins, this diſcovers the *wages* of the leaſt *ſin* to be *death*, *Rom.* 6. 23. whereas other Religions are fitted with Fleſhly liberties, to gratifie mens corruptions (witneſs *Mahomet's Alcoran* indulging a libertie to the fleſh) this commands thoſe pieces of holineſs, which are moſt contrarie, and repugnant to our natural corruptions; ſuch as *ſelf-denial*, *taking up the croſs*, &c. It diſcovers Original ſin, and *man* by the guilt thereof *liable to the challenge of God*, *the cenſure of the law*, in the firſt moment of his being: and that the *leaſt ſin* (every *idle word*) *muſt be accounted for*, Matth. 12. 36. Had it been an Humane

mane invention, you ſhall have found the *fleſh gratified*; as all Religions in the world have ſome way or other to do it. *Non habent* (ſaith *S. Auguſtin* of *Plato*) *iſta Paginæ vultum pietatis hujus, lachrymas confeſsionis, ſacrificium tuum, ſpiritum contribulatum, cor contritum: nemo ibi cantat, Nonne Deo ſubdita erit anima mea?* that is, *All the Heathen Philoſophie hath not ſo much as a ſhew of this piety, the tears of a broken heart, and a contrite ſpirit, which is thy ſacrifice: no man here crys out with David, Let all that is within me praiſe his holy name*, Pſal. 103.1. The principles of moralitie might deck and garniſh the outward man, but Scripture holineſs onely repairs and renews the ſoul, commands the very thoughts, and curbs the very firſt irregular motions of the heart. In a word, this onely transforms the ſoul into *the image of God from glorie to glorie by the Spirit*, 2 Cor.3.18.

3. *The excellency of Goſpel-promiſes*; ſuch as Philoſophers never hinted: ſuch as the apprehenſions of man cannot comprehend now they are revealed, much leſs could they imagine, or invent. It would be infinite to enlarge; I ſhall therefore inſtance but in two: *Eaſe to troubled, wearied ſouls: Nemo ibi audit, Venite ad me, qui laboratis*, ſaith *S. Auguſtine*, ſpeaking of the writings of Philoſophers. He could not among all the Platonick Philoſophers finde ſuch an expreſſion; ſo comfortable a promiſe, as this, *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden.* No *ſanctuary* for troubled ſouls, but *the bloud of Chriſt*, which this Scripture onely diſcovers. *Iſai.*40.1,2. *Speak ye comfortably to Jeruſalem*, &c. And another Promiſe in *Iſai.* 43. 2. *I will be with thee when thou paſſeſt through the fire, and through the water*: not ſuch a Promiſe in all the writings of men: a Promiſe of Gods gracious preſence here, and then the Promiſe of eternal reſt in another world. The Heathens might dream of an *Elyſium*; *Mahomet* promiſe a confluence of ſenſual *carnal delights* in green meadows to his followers; but an happineſs made up of an *eternal enjoying* God by *viſion* and *love*, is a thing their reaſon could never reach, but muſt certainly be a *Divine Revelation*, as being that which *Eye hath not ſeen, ear hath not heard, nor can enter into the heart of man to conceive of.*

4. *The nature and event of Scripture propheſies:* which are ſuch as the *eye of omniſcience* onely can reach, as being beyond the foreſight of the moſt perfect creature. *Moſes* foretold, *the ſeed of the woman ſhould break the ſerpents head*, much above three thouſand years, er'e it was accompliſhed. So *Jacobs* propheſie of *the coming of Shiloh upon the departure of the Scepter from Judah*, Gen.49. fell out accordingly, a little before Chriſts birth, when the Jews were ſubjected to

to the power of the Romans. Thus all the Prophets foretelling *the calling of the Gentiles*, a thing ſo ſtrange, that when accompliſhed, many did not *underſtand* it, and more were *offended at it*. *Iſaiah* propheſied the captivitie, and deſtruction of Jeruſalem, even then, when the kingdome was in a flouriſhing condition, both which afterward fell out. Thus *Joſiah's* name and actions were foretold three hundred years before his birth, 1 *Kings* 13. 2. and *Cyrus's* an hundred years before his birth, *Iſai.* 45. 1, 2. *&c.* And what doth all this ſpeak but a Divine revelation. Man may ſee ſome things future, as they are in their cauſes, but to foretel ſuch future events, as are merely dependant upon the Divine will, ſuch as theſe are, is onely proper to God. *Teſtimonium divinitatis, veritas divinationis*, ſaies *Tertullian*, *The certainty of foretelling is a ſure Teſtimony of Divinity*. And ſo we finde that in *Iſai.* 41. 22, 23. the foretelling ſuch futurities is made a diſtinction of the true God, from all falſe ones.

5. Conſider *how theſe Scriptures have gained authority and acceptance from the world by quite contrary means to other writings*: not by ſinfull compliances with the humours, and luſts of men (which hath much promoted the *Alcoran* of *Mahomet*) for theſe it impartially and ſeverely taxes, and condemns: not inſinuated into mens mindes by the pomp and pleaſantneſs of Rhetorick: (no adornings with the flowers of Rhetorick, to make them ſeem gratefull to the world) but by a plain ſtile, and homely expreſſion. It gains acceptance by the *myſteriouſneſs* of the things more, then *eloquence of the ſtile*: ſo the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 2. 4. *My ſpeech and my preaching was not with enticing words of mans wiſdome, but in demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power*. It is the cuſtome of men to flatter Great ones by a complemental dedication, and thereby to gain honour and repute to their writings: but obſerve the dedications of the Scriptures, they are *to the poor, condemned, ſcattered Saints at Corinth*, and elſewhere; ſo 1 *Pet.* 1. 1. Humane writings gain acceptance by the command and Patronage of Great ones: as *Mahomet's* upheld by a continued war; *Nebuchadnezzar* makes a *fiery furnace* for them who will not *bow down* to the *Image* he ſets up: but here it was quite contrary, a *furnace, fiery tryals*, and *perſecutions* prepared for them, who did receive, and profeſs the word, under many Heathen Emperours, yet it thrived, and the profeſſours thereof multiplied, not withſtanding all oppoſition, and diſadvantages. Which certainly, even in the conviction of reaſon, ſpeaks *the hand of God* ſtretched out to preſerve his word, and bringing in many to the acknowledgement of it: that notwithſtanding the oppoſition theſe Scriptures have met with from perſecuting Emperours, cunning He-

Hereticks, and at firſt promulged onely by a few poor fiſhermen, ſent out with that commiſſion, *Matth.* 28. 19. to preach *a crucified Saviour* to an *obſtinate world*: that notwithſtanding all this, I ſay, it ſhould be preſerved, and propagated, ſpeaks it from God, as *Gamaliel* a Phariſee argued, *Acts* 5. 38, 39. Had it not been thus from God, ſurely God would long ſince have ſtopped the mouths of us, Miniſters of it, as the greateſt deluders and impoſtours in the world (whom yet he hath oft *miraculouſly preſerved* and encouraged) and have countenanced the oppoſers of it; whom yet his *ſevereſt judgements* have overtaken: witneſs *Antiochus*, *Julian*, and the reſt. That the Profeſſours of the Goſpel ſhould be as *lambs* among *wolves*, yet not devoured; that *perſecution* ſhould be *illecebra magis ſectæ*, as *Tertullian* ſaies: and that it ſhould thrive by oppoſition, this ſpeaks it ſurely to be from God. *Tertull. Apol. cap. 49.*

6. Conſider *the confirmation of this word by miracles, ſuch as created power could never reach.* The Apoſtle indeed foretels *the coming of Antichriſt* to be with many *ſigns* and *wonders*, 2 Theſſal. 2. 9. yea, but *lying wonders*; but Scripture-miracles are ſuch, as can be effected onely by *the arm of omnipotency*: as, *Dividing the ſea, curing one born blinde, Feeding thouſands with a few loaves and fiſhes, Raiſing the dead from a ſetled corruption*, as *Lazarus*: theſe are ſuch as *Antichriſt*, I think, never pretended to: therefore, as the Magicians, when they could not do the *like miracles*, as *Moſes* did, cryed out, *This is the finger of God*, Exod. 8. 19. ſo we here, *This is the truth, the word of God.* God would never certainly *lay out* his *power*, or *work miracles* to confirm, or ſeal to *a lye*. At *John* 5. 36. our Saviour urgeth this as an argument, why his *perſon* and *doctrine* ſhould be entertained.

7. Conſider *Satans enmity againſt the Scripture.* His great deſign is, (if poſſible to keep men from the *letter* of the Scripture) to hinder men from an effectual entertainment of the Goſpel: and therefore hath ſtirred up, in all ages almoſt, Perſecutours to oppoſe it, and Hereticks to delude and wreſt it. It ſtrikes at, and threatens ruine to *his kingdome*, therefore he endeavours his utmoſt to ſubvert it: and therefore all the deſigns now on foot againſt the Scripture, you muſt look upon them, as the plots of Satan. You may read a piece of Philoſophy, Hiſtory, or any Humane writing, and finde little, or no reluctancie againſt the entertainment of it. Now, why ſhould not men bring as ready a belief to Scripture, or entertain the truth of it, when they read it? ſurely it is from the Devil, tempting them to unbelief: even becauſe the *God of this world hath blinded their eyes*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. *Tertullian* gathered the goodneſs of the Goſpel from this, *Quòd à Nerone damnatum*, be-

cauſe it was ſo perſecuted by *Nero*: and we the excellencie of the Scriptures from this, becauſe the Devil ſo much maligns it.

8. Conſider *how it advances God, and debaſes man.* It gives God the glory of all his Attributes and Works: both in the work of *Creation* and *Redemption.* It gives him the glorie of what we *have* and *do*: *What haſt thou, that thou haſt not received?* 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. there in what we *have*, and in what we *do*, *S. Paul* acknowledges 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. *I laboured more abundantly, yet not I, but the grace of God within me.* It tells us, that *of our ſelves we are not able to think a good thought*, 2 Cor. 3. 5. yet that *we are able to do all things through Chriſt*, Phil. 4. 13. Now in Humane writings men ſeek their own applauſe and credit, and this moves them to write; but theſe writings the *glory of God*, which our Saviour more then once makes the *badge* of the truth of his doctrine, *John* 7. 19. and *John* 8. 50. &c. Scripture advances God, as the *firſt cauſe* and *laſt end.*

And thus having finiſhed the Doctrine, I proceed to the Fifth General,

The *Application* of it.

Uſe First, *See here the cruel Antichriſtian tyranny of the Church of Rome*, which forbids private Chriſtians the uſe and ſearch of the Scriptures: Antichriſtian ſurely in this; Chriſt bids, *Search them, for in them ye think ye have eternal life*: they forbid the ſearch of them, for fear of Hereſie and Errour. The Apoſtle tells us, *The Scripture is profitable*, they ſay, *it is pernicious*: our Saviour would have *the light be ſet upon a candleſtick*, Matth. 5. 15. they *put it under a buſhel*, and ſo leave the people *in darkneſs.* How much againſt nature is it, to with-hold *milk* from a *childe?* ſo much it is to withhold the *ſincere milk* of Gods word from his children: or to ſend a ſouldier into the field unarmed, how cruel is it? So to rob the people of this *ſpiritual armour*, this *ſword of the Spirit*, and expoſe them naked to the power and fury, the deluſions and ſtratagems of Satan. As the *Philiſtines* out of envy dealt with the *wells of water*, Gen. 26. 15. ſo do theſe with the Scriptures, they envy the people the *water of life*, therefore *ſtop up* theſe *wells of ſalvation*, or elſe throw dirt into them; ſo that the people can have little of the *pure water*, but as it is pudled with the dirt of their traditions, or Monkiſh and Jeſuitical gloſſes and depravations: and being thus robbed of the *compaſs of the Scripture*, they quickly ſplit upon the *rock of errour.*

Uſe Second, *Hence we learn that they are inexcuſable, who neglect this duty*: whom neither the command of God, their own good and advantage, neither Religion or Policie can prevail with: but

but a few obſcene Poets, or idle Romances, or ridiculous Ballads are more ſearched by them, then the Scriptures. *Get you Bibles* (ſaith S. *Chryſoſtom*) *which are the phyſick and medicines of your ſouls.* Surely, the neglect of of this is intolerable. God hath not overburthened you with Scripture. There are many things that Jeſus did, which are not written, but *theſe are written*, John 20. 30, 31. that is *theſe few*. It is neither ſo coſtly nor dear, but the meaneſt may purchaſe it; nor ſo voluminous, but the moſt employed may read and ſearch it. The motives to it (as you heard before) are weighty, and therefore the neglect of it the more dangerous. But, becauſe many things may be pretended for the neglect hereof, I ſhall remove a ſcruple or two.

Firſt *Object.* Say ſome, *I am unlearned, I cannot ſearch into it.*

Anſw. To this I anſwer; I wiſh thou wert learned, and able to read thy ſelf: but then know, thou oughteſt ſo much the more carefully to attend, and conſciencioufly wait upon the publick reading of the Scripture in theſe publick aſſemblies. This hath been the *conſtant practiſe* of the Church in all ages, as is evident partly in *Luke* 4, 16, 17. and partly in *Acts* 13.15. where you ſee in both places, it was the *uſual cuſtome* to have the Scriptures read in their *publick aſſemblies*; and after reading followed preaching. The ground whereof was, ſurely, as to preſerve *the purity of Scripture-doctrine* in the Church, that the people, hearing the word ſo frequently read, might not be impoſed upon by *errour*, or *deluſions* of men: ſo alſo for the *profit*, *advantage*, and *edification* of thoſe, who cannot *read*, or *ſearch* the Scriptures; and that *the preaching of the word* might come with more light and power upon their hearts. If you cannot read *your ſelves*, get others to read *unto you*, and be you ſo much the more in *prayer* and *meditation*.

Second *Object. I have ſo much employment in the world that I have no leiſure to ſearch the Scriptures. If I ſhould privately ſearch Scripture, and attend frequently upon the preaching of the word, it would ſet me behinde hand in the world, and hinder my thriving.*

Anſw. I anſwer, This is much what the Apologie, that thoſe made, who pretended their *farms*, and *oxen*, as an excuſe for not coming unto the *wedding*, Matth. 22. But, *Chriſtians*, break through your *worldly employments*, prefer *God* before the *world*, and your *ſouls* before your *bodies*, an *act of Religion* before all *worldly buſineſs*, and believe it, you will be no *loſers* by it; God will *ſucceed*, and *bleſs* your *labours* more. *Never was any man a loſer by his Religion.* See what God promiſed to the Jews, *Exod.* 34. 24. that *He would ſecure their land for them*, while they *went up* to *Jeruſalem* to *worſhip*

the Lord. And what our Saviour ſaid to the Diſciples, *Luke* 22. 35. *When I ſent you out without purſe, and ſcrip, and ſhoes, lacked ye any thing?* Thou pretendeſt no *leiſure*; the truth is, *Non parùm temporis habemus, ſed multùm perdimus*, ſaies *Seneca*, Yes, *we have time enough, but we looſe too much of it.* Thou haſt no *leiſure* for *this:* but, *Art thou at leiſure for thy pleaſures*, and not for *Religion?* for the *world*, and not for *God?* for ſhame cheat not your own ſouls with ſuch vain pretences, but as thou deſireſt the knowledge of Chriſt here, and the enjoyment of Chriſt hereafter, be conſciencious in this duty of *Searching the Scriptures.*

Uſe Third, *It reproves thoſe, who believe not this truth, that the Scripture is the word of God.* But you will ſay, *This concerns not us, Go charge the Turks and Indians with this.* No, (my Brethren) many of our ſelves here are guilty of this, for though mens mouths profeſs it, yet their hearts deny it, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome, *In words they profeſs God, but in works they deny him*, Tit. 1.16. Did men really believe the corruptions of their natures, and their conſtant liableneſs unto wrath; would there be ſo much pride, ſo much confidence in ſin? Did men really believe, that *of every idle word they muſt give an account*; would there be ſo much *idle, frothy, ungodly, profane, laſcivious* talking and diſcourſe? Did men believe the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21. that all thoſe vices there rehearſed were *the works of the fleſh*; would thoſe ſins ſo much abound? Did men believe that *they who did no wrong to their neighbour ſhould enter into, and dwell in the Tabernacle of God*, Pſal. 15. 1, 5. would there be ſo much oppreſſion and extortion? Did men believe that *God will come in flaming fire to render vengeance upon all them, that know not God, and obey not his Goſpel*, as in 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 8. would there be ſuch a contented wilfull ignorance of God? *Truth*, where it is effectually entertained, will have an influence upon the life. How do moſt men hold *Goſpel-truth* in *unrighteouſneſs?* as the Apoſtle ſaies, the *Gentiles* did *the light of nature*, Rom. 1. 18. ſo theſe with-hold *Goſpel-truths*: for, certainly, *wickedneſs* in the life ſpeaks an *ineffectual entertainment* of the *truth.*

Uſe Fourth, *It condemns thoſe who do not value and prize the Scripture.* How did the Heathens prize their Oracles? yet the generalitie of Chriſtians do not prize *theſe Oracles of God*, as the Apoſtle calls them, *Rom.* 3. 2. Three things there are, that make this out unto us.

I. *Mens wilfull and contented ignorance of Scripture.* What things we prize, we ſearch into. How does the Scholar pry, and ſearch into thoſe notions, he affects and values? So would men do, if they did value and prize the word aright; but the contrarie to this rather

ther is evident by their language, *Depart from us, for we deſire not the knowledge of thy ways*, Job 21. 14.

II. *Mens wearineſs in ſearching the Scripture.* What things we prize, in the ſearch of them we finde delight: but, how are men tyred at a Sermon, or Sabbath, in which the Scriptures are read? Is not the language of thoſe *Iſraelites* in *Amos* 8. 5. the language of too many among us? *When will the Sabbath be ended?* &c. Men are ſooner weary of *this*, then any *other book*.

III. *Mens ſeldom diſcourſing of Scripture.* As they ſaid to *Peter* in another caſe, *Matth.* 26.73. *Thy ſpeech bewrayeth thee*: ſo mens ſpeeches bewray their want of affections to the Scriptures. The Scholar upon every occaſion is diſcourſing of thoſe notions, which he prizeth: but men are far more wiſe to diſcourſe of the world, then of heaven, and heavenly things.

Uſe Fifth, *Of exhortation: That you would endeavour to get your faith well grounded in this fundamental truth*: that neither Satan tempt you, nor men diſpute you out of it; for till then

I. *Your faith will be uncertain and weak*; as a building without a foundation; as a ſhip without ballaſt or anchor, ſoon toſſed and ſhip-wrackt: and this we may think is the cauſe of moſt mens Apoſtacie in theſe declining times.

II. *Your lives will be but looſe.* If you be not throughly convinced of your dutie of walking by Scripture-rule, you will walk at uncertainties, and ſo amiſs.

III. *Your comforts weak, if not grounded on Scripture-promiſes.* This is one main reaſon, why mens comforts ebb and flow ſo much; they are not grounded on a ſure belief of Scripture; and if once your faith in this truth waver, the foundation of your comfort muſt needs be ſhaken. For the attaining whereof I can give you no better direction, then that you *Pray earneſtly for the Spirit*, that he would pleaſe

1. *To open the eyes of your minde*, illightning, and irradiating the *underſtanding* to ſee thoſe arguments, and evidences of this truth, which lie in the Scriptures. So *S. John* tells us, 1 *John* 2.26. *Theſe things have I written unto you, that no man ſeduce you.* And, without this, all other arguments will be ineffectual to the begetting of a *ſaving* and *through belief* of this truth. As *Agar*, when her eyes were opened, ſaw *a well of water*, Gen. 21. 19. ſo there are arguments to evince this truth ſufficient in the Scriptures, but they will never be brought home to the ſoul with a *full conviction*, till the Spirit open our eyes to ſee them: for this is *one end*, why the Spirit of God is *given to us* and *received of us*, that *we may know the things that are freely given unto us by the Spirit of God*, as in 1 *Cor.* 2.12.

2. *To remove that natural enmitie and prejudice, that we have againſt an effectual aſſent to the Goſpel, and ſo ſanctifie our hearts, as to make it cloſe with, and heartily embrace it, as the truth and word of God. Truth* reſiſts our *corruptions*, and *they it.* What is the great *Goſpel-truth*, but *Chriſt his coming to undertake as our Jeſus?* this we cannot ſavingly aſſent unto, but *by the Spirit*, as in 1 *Cor* 12.3. *No man can ſay, that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Spirit.* Corruption fills the ſoul with prejudices againſt the truth. The Philoſopher obſerves, that the *Mathematicks* (though *abſtruſe* in themſelves) are ſooner learnt by a young man *diſſolute*, and that hath not tamed his *paſsions*, then *morality*: becauſe thoſe, being mere *ſpeculations*, bring no *oppoſitions* to his luſts, which the *precepts* of *morality* curb and reſtrain. So mens corruptions and unſubdued luſts prejudice the ſoul againſt the belief of Goſpel-truth, which the ſanctifying work of the Spirit doth ſubdue and remove, and ſo diſpoſes the ſoul for the entertainment of the truth of the Goſpel: as we ſee in *S. Paul*, who, having his *luſts ſubdued* once, came to *preach that* Goſpel, *which* before he had *perſecuted.*

FINIS.